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Media Influence on the Adoption of e-commerce: The Kenyan Scenario

by

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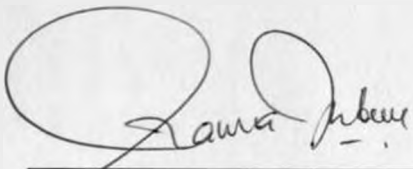
Declaration

I declare that this Project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

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This Project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University supervisor.

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To my father, The Late Eng. Evans H. Onyango,

The Late Benjamin Okudo

and

Wolfgang Amadeus Omondi.

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Abstract

This study seeks to look into the role of Kenyan media in influencing the adoption of electronic commerce among corporate organizations.

In spite of the advantages that may accrue to corporate businesses directly and to a society by embracing e-commerce, the Kenyan media appear to have inadequately addressed issues that could promote e-commerce. This study seeks to identify those issues that the media has failed to adequately address in order to influence the adoption of e-commerce in Kenya.

The findings of this study looked at ways in which the media is using e-commerce in its operations, thus influencing corporate organizations to adopt the technology; opinions of internal and external publics on how the media are using new technology thus the potential to influence the growth of e-commerce in Kenya; opinions of service providers and higher educational institutions on the e-commerce environment in Kenya; and the challenges facing the growth of e-commerce in Kenya.

One of the conclusions of this study is that the media has a role, beyond operating a state-of-the-art website, in influencing corporate organizations to adopt e-commerce.

Functionalities of media websites include electronic mail (email), information, entertainment, discussion groups (chat groups), online shopping (view catalogues and order products), newsgroups, research tool, advertising or trade tool, as a communication tool to serve customers and suppliers.

On the assumption that the media has a role in educating corporate organizations on the gains of engaging in e-commerce, the media website is recognized as being on the cutting edge of technological development in society.

Findings of the notion of interactivity has highlighted ways in which the users can modify the form and content of computer messages, and in so doing, accomplish a wide range of social tasks including e-commerce.

Finally, the researcher suggests ways in which challenges facing the growth of e-commerce can be addressed. These include incorporating Information Communication and Technology into Corporate Social Responsibility programmes; carrying out a planned and deliberate effort to carry articles and features that educate corporate organizations on e-commerce; the government should make a deliberate effort to invest in equipment and training of lecturers in institutions of higher learning; create public awareness on the advantages of adopting e-commerce; and lobbying for the reduction of internet connectivity costs.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introductory Background

This study seeks to look into the role of Kenyan media in influencing the adoption of electronic commerce among corporate organizations.

Electronic Commerce, commonly referred to as e-commerce, is the simple process of buying and selling merchandise on the internet. E-commerce takes place either between business to business (B2B), and business to customer (B2C). It requires reliable and regular communication between businesses and customers, whether individual or corporate. This study focuses on the business to customer aspect of e-commerce.

According to the World Fact Book (2002), there are about 159,000,000 users of the internet, out of a population of 295,734,134 in the United States of America. This represents more than half of USA's entire population. E-commerce is at advanced levels in the developed world. Individual and corporate customers are able to carry out transactions in the comfort of their homes and offices. Amazon.com is one of the world's leading retail e-commerce websites and has sites hosted in the United States of America, China, Japan, United Kingdom, Germany, Canada, France and Austria. It allows for customers to make purchases from vendors, and for individual sellers to dispose of pre-owned goods.

In 2004, South Africa had a total of 3,535,000 internet users out of a population of 45 million people (www.internetworldstats.com/af/za). There are 93 internet service

providers registered in South Africa as of 2005 (www.ispa.org.za). According to the South African Advertising Research Foundation, only one in 13 South African had access to the internet in 2003. This is an increase from one in 15 recorded in 2001. However, this is the highest level of penetration on the African continent, with Egypt, Morocco and Kenya following in that order. The B2C market offers a limited number of services similar to those in the US and Europe. Use of on-line banking in South Africa is second only to the use of email. The country's largest banks (such as Standard Bank, ABSA and Nedbank) provide comprehensive business and personal on-line banking services, including account reviews, transfers, bill presentation and payment, as well as various cash and portfolio-management capabilities. Other leading retail activities include travel reservations and purchases of CDs, DVDs and books. Leading retail websites include Kalahari.net, Digit Mall and Kulala.com. Retail stores like Woolworths and Edgars have websites that facilitate e-commerce.

The internet was introduced to Kenya in 1995 by the Africa Regional Centre for Computing (ARCC). It was the first provider of web-based internet services in the country, while the first commercial internet service provider started operations in 1995. By April 2004, there were 73 registered internet service providers, 16 of which were active, 1,030,000 users and over 1000 cyber cafes and telephone bureaus. (Draft National ICT policy document, October 2004 p. 3). Kenya's population is approximately 30 million. This reflects lesser use of the internet in Kenya as compared to South Africa. This study therefore seeks to identify those factors that demonstrate media influence, and

how the media inadequately educates corporate organizations on the benefits of adopting e-commerce.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In spite of the advantages that may accrue to corporate businesses directly and to a society by embracing e-commerce, the Kenyan media appear to have inadequately addressed issues that could promote e-commerce. This study seeks to identify those issues that the media has failed to adequately address in order to influence the adoption of e-commerce in Kenya. The possible reasons could include the failure by the media to provide systematic persuasive information that could compel the business corporate sector to fully embrace the concept of e-commerce in executing transactions; inadequate information on the benefits of information technology training in higher education; and inadequate media engagement and discourse targeting corporate organizations.

1.3 Objectives

1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective of the study was to identify and examine the role of the Kenyan media in influencing the adoption of e-commerce by the corporate business sector.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of the study were to:

- Establish the level of media engagement in e-commerce thus influencing its publics to adopt e-commerce;

- Determine the role of the Kenyan media in promoting information technology training in higher education;
- Establish the role of media in engaging legal, policy and social issues with a view to influencing e-commerce in Kenya; and
- Establish the level of media engagement in e-commerce information and discourse that targets corporate business organizations.

1.4 Assumptions

There are a number of assumptions with regard to the e-commerce environment in Kenya. Some of these assumptions are listed below.

- The media is a key player in e-commerce and can set an example to corporate organizations, thus influencing the adoption of e-commerce by corporate organizations in Kenya;
- The media has a role in promoting information technology training in higher education with a view to influence e-commerce in Kenya;
- The media has a role in engaging policy makers on legal and social issues surrounding the e-commerce environment, thus influencing the adoption of e-commerce in Kenya; and
- The media has a role in engaging in e-commerce discourse targeting corporate organizations, thus influencing the adoption of e-commerce in Kenya.

1.5 Justification

This study is of benefit to the field of communication, to businesses and to lobby groups.

The study contributes to knowledge in the field of communication by challenging the media to take a role in promoting the use of e-commerce in Kenya. Through data collected from the business weeklies of the two leading dailies, the study will reveal the levels at which the media discusses issues to do with e-commerce in Kenya. This in turn feeds into the role the media plays in the development of a country.

Businesses too will benefit. The study will help identify and examine those factors of e-commerce that lead to business growth. This will help encourage and convince corporate business organizations to adopt e-commerce. Adopting e-commerce will lead to increased revenues and in turn lead to increased profits.

There are corporate business lobby groups in the country like the Kenya Association of Manufacturers and the Kenya Private Sector Alliance. Findings from the study will encourage corporate business organizations to lobby the Government of Kenya to formulate and implement policies that favour e-commerce. Lobby groups can also use the findings of the study to petition the government to invest in infrastructure to support e-commerce through state-run organizations like Telkom and the Kenya Power and Lighting Company. These lobby groups work in collaboration with the media to capture government attention to pertinent business issues.

1.6 Operational Definitions

There are various terminologies that will be frequently used in the research. There is also a need to distinguish between commonly confused terminologies. Terms to be defined include:

- **E-business:** electronic settlement of businesses in terms of sales (e-commerce), procurement (e-procurement) and those applications relevant for a company's internal function sectors.
- **E-commerce:** exchange of goods and services by means of the internet and other computer networks
- **E-transactions:** transactions that are carried out electronically through the internet
- **B2B:** exchange of goods and services between one business organization and another
- **B2C:** transfer of goods and services from business organizations to the end consumer
- **ICT:** Information, Communication and Technology
- **Information technology:** processing and distribution of data using computer hardware and software, telecommunications and digital electronics.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introductory overview

The concept of electronic commerce (e-commerce) is not new. However the rapid rise of the Internet has made the potential of e-commerce more promising. It is now widely stated that the Internet and e-commerce has transformed traditional business and consumer life. By one estimate, internet bases sales reached US \$ 43 billion in 1998 and were expected by then to reach US \$ 95 billion in 1999. Most analysis has revised upward their prediction for online business early next decade. Growth rates are expected to be particularly high in Asia (Yoshio et al., 2001).

The internet enhances the possibilities for developing economies to participate in the emerging digital economy. Internet based electronic commerce is likely to promote economic growth and welfare in developing countries significantly. New export opportunities should attract new foreign and domestic investment and thereby enhance growth. Most large industrial companies in developing countries already use the internet, and what is perhaps surprising is that a growing number of small and medium sized firms are also becoming internet users. Internet commerce has not penetrated all economic sectors equally. Sectors that are expected to grow by more than 150 per cent per year include; computer hardware and software, real estate, publishing and information services finance, and internet services. Tourism which is an increasing important source of growth for developing countries also looks set to be boosted by electronic commerce. Analysis estimate that the travel industry accounted for some 20-30 per cent of total online

revenues in 1997. Online travel sales are expected to grow to almost US \$ 20 billion by 2008. financial services is another area of great potential growth in the online world and internet banking is already available in many developed countries enabling customers to pay bills, check account balances, or transfer funds. What does internet comer mean for firms? The benefits of e-commerce are certainly compelling. Internet commerce can substantially improve productivity by lowering transaction and production costs, facilitating market entry, improving customer services extending geographical coverage and enabling a new potential source of revenue (Yoshio et al., 2001). Although e-commerce potential appears promising, many challenges still remain. Barriers to e-commerce are to some extent the same as those for internet use in general. But several of the challenges are specific to e-commerce, and they include the need for a legal and financial framework for internet transactions and the provision of market transactions and the provision of market access and trade logistics. Developing countries aiming to promote e-commerce would have to work, in the short term, on improving communication infrastructure and accessibility, and adjusting the legal, financial and logistical conditions to the new requirements of online trade. In the long term, they would certainly have to address some of the improved education and computer skills (Yoshio, 2001).

2.2 Print media and online information

The traditional role of publisher in the information value chain is to mediate between content producers, information users, advertisers and other attention seekers (ABN – AMRO Media sector research UK, Bakker et al 1999). Rather the print media as intermediary publishers select, check, integrate and package information. They aggregate

demand for information into audiences. They distribute information and sell “access to audiences” to advertisers. They also spread the costs of information production and distribution over a large number of users and advertisers, and consequently make information not only physically but also economically accessible to users. The internet offers an additional channel to perform their intermediary tasks, alongside the traditional print channel.

According to the study conducted by Bakker and Scholter in 1999 in Netherlands, the major advantage of internet as a new distribution platform for information providers is that production and distribution costs are much lower for internet publication than for print publication. It was found that publishers of scientific print journals for example, spend about 17 per cent of revenues on paper and distribution costs, whereas publishers of online scientific journals only needed 2 percent revenue on distribution (ABN – AMRO, 1998:43). The first copy cost of content production and packaging, and the marketing costs of contents selling, on the other hand are not lower for internet publication. If anything, first copy and marketing cost increase with the switch of internet distribution because publishers need to make increasing amounts of information accessible in an increasingly crowded market place (ABM-AMRO, 1998; Shapiro and Varian, 1999). This change in cost structure affects competitive relations on companies in the information value chain.

New Entry of Free Information Providers and Horizontal Competition.

The decline in information reproduction and distribution costs reduces market entry barriers for players that possess valuable information. Content producers and attention-seekers can now use relatively cheap internet technology to distribute their information at a low cost directly to the audience of customer. Examples include scholars starting online pre-print archives, companies providing products information via web sites or e-journal of research reports available on websites, governments regulatory bodies and legal courts offering legal background information and policy documents insurance information policy on-line, and internet start-ups creating dedicated information services (Jasco, 1999a, 1999b; Rutrer, 1998; Van der Warff, 2002).

What characterizes many of these new entrants is that publishing is not their core business. Rather their core business is research, consultancy, policy making or the sale of non-information products. These players provide information for free (or at very low prices) to draw attention to their core products. They pay first copy cost from research, public relations (PR) or marketing budgets. Compared with traditional publishers who do need to earn back first copy costs by selling information and access to audiences, these new entrants tend to operate as low cost competitors (Porter; 1980). They force down prices in what used to be a relatively protected information niche (Evans and Wurster, 2000). One major consequence of the entry of new providers of free information is that the quantity (but not necessarily the quality) of available information increases, and that attention and time of users become increasingly scarce and valuable goods (Shapiro and Varian 1999). Traditional publishers who want to avert the (price) threats posed by new entrants, re-orient their services to address these new scarcities. Rather than simply

distributing information, they elaborate and customize their intermediary services towards targeted client groups. For users, they can provide easy-to-use and affordable access to comprehensive yet well-selected high quality content from multiple diverse and (in themselves) less accessible information sources. For advertisers, they can provide quality environments in which advertisers can access well-defined audiences (Euriquez – Harris, 2000’ “fee” versus “for fee” 1999; Gallagher et al 2001; Guidon, 2000; Lennon, 1999; Liebman, 1998; Raeder, 1997; Shapiro and Varian, 1999).

2.3 Dis-intermediation and Vertical Competition

The entry of content producers and attention seekers in the internet business amounts to a process of dis-intermediation. This is a process in which an intermediary function is bypassed and eventually destroyed (Evans and Wurster, 2000:69 ;) Sarkar et al 1995). Disintermediation is the ultimate example of increasing vertical competition in the formation value chain.

Both disintermediation and new entry gives user a wider choice of products and suppliers. Users can obtain information more easily more cheaply from original source than before. Declining information reproduction and distribution costs moreover enable information users and share documents. Whether via legitimate electronic interlibrary loans or via unauthorized copying likewise, organizations in business and attention seekers have a much wider choice of access to audience and customers.

Internet therefore strengthens the competitive position of users, producers and attention seekers *vis a vis* traditional publishers (Van der Wurff, 2002). Conversely the media aim

to reinforce their relationships with users. The product differentiation and customization strategies that they adopt are generally expected to increase customer loyalty to reduce risk that users turn to competing providers, and potentially even to lock in users (Evans and Wurster, 2000; Shapiro and Varian, 1999). More specifically the internet enables the print media (frequently for the first time) to communicate and interact directly with users.

This produces valuable information for emerging customer relationship management programmes. At the same time, product differentiation and customization strategies require that publishers have good and preferably exclusive relationships with preferred content producers on the other side of the information value chain, and that print media have copyright control over content. Internet therefore also initiates attempts by publishers to regain control in the publishing value chain.

2.4 Online Business and Revenue Model

Business models offer a description of the roles and relationships among a firm's consumers, allies and suppliers that identifies the major flows of products information and money, and the major benefits to participants (Weill and Vitale, 2001); cited in Holland et al 2001:11). So far, two business models have been identified: one model for traditional publishers who are responding strategically to the increasing scarcity of time and attention users; and the second model for new providers of free information who are building their publishing strategy on the provision of specialized and (sometimes) proprietary information of sufficient attractiveness at very low prices.

In these business models, incumbent publishers (e.g. the Dairy Nation and the Standard Print Media) and new entrants share some characteristics with the two business models identified in the literature on e-commerce, namely the business model of the online intermediary, and that of the online direct seller or e-tailor. Other e-commerce business models that may be relevant to publishers are the model of the on-line content provider (that sells information via the intermediaries) the on-line broker, the provider of virtual communities, the full service provider (which offer a full range of services including information to a particular user group) and the infrastructure provider (Holland et al; 2001). Together these models encompass the range of services and revenue models that traditional and new information providers can adopt, including online advertising, the sale of online information per unit (pay per view) via subscriptions or in combination with print information, the sale of print subscription online, the sale of other information and non-information products (transaction services), and bundled revenue models (Gallaugher et al 2001; Mings and White, 2000).

Certainly, online information sales and advertising models have only been successful in a minority of cases, where specialized services like the Wall Street Journal were sold to specified groups. (Ming and White, 2000; Nouwen and Verkerk, 1998). Experience with other online ventures indicates that the existence of stable customer relationships built on trust and the ability to translate knowledge of customers needs in value-added services, are important ingredients of successful online business models, hence e-commerce. Not surprisingly incumbent firms with established customer bases, ample experience and well known brands are better positioned to capitalize on these strengths than internet start-ups

(Holland et al, 2001). This suggests that established publishers have an edge in the competition with emerging online providers of free information.

2.4.1 Turning the Internet into Mass Media

To assess the impact of the use of internet by the traditional media, their increasing presence and use online is usually considered (Eco, 2001). On the contrary, the position is that the invasion of the internet by radio and television is only the first state of a more complex process. This process comprises, on the one hand the dissemination of news in many territories of the internet, and on the other the influence of the internet style on the classic media. The dissemination of news increasingly reinforces the internet as a mass media (Morris and Organ, 1996), while the influence of the internet at a symbolic level in particular on television and the beginning of a new process that makes the internet the starting point of trans-medial production, and reinforce the internetization of the traditional mass media.

Together the mediatization of the internet and the internetization of the classic media, focus attention on the succession of thrusts and counter thrust modifications and reciprocal incursions, for which the traditional means of communication and the internet have been responsible. They make it possible to provide a precious social testing ground, in which the balance and synergies between classic and new media and the specializations of different ICTs are being defined.

The internet is modifying newspapers, radio and television and vice versa, the traditional media are changing the internet irrevocably. Together these processes may be seen as manifestation of one underlying process which is the mutual domestication of and

convergence between the internet, the mass media and hence e-commerce. The internet is becoming a mass medium. That is, it is undergoing the influence of the classic mass media and taking on the mission of providing information and entertainment while the traditional media are succumbing to the fascination of the internet, its electronic immateriality, its self representation and its recognition as the emblem of modernity.

A degree of mutual influence between media technologies is inevitable, both because the communicative environment squeezes them into one space and because people make use of various means of communication in everyday life. In e-commerce, depending on difference in approval expressed by users over time, communicative technologies find that the territory they occupy is reduced in terms of time (speed), cost, and is expanded in terms of convenience, choice and reputation (National Media Observatory of the University of Scilemo Haly, 2002).

The primary action that takes place behind the scene in the media industry and drives the mediatization of the net and the internetization of the media, therefore, is the attempt to get hold of or reconquer markets. Newspapers, for example, have invaded the internet and gotten hold of the young and adults who refuse to spend money on printed press. Television has given itself a face life so as to look like the internet in the hope that those who have abandoned television to navigate on the open sea of the internet will retrace their steps. It has been said that the engine powers not always in an evident way, the processes of mutual domestication of ICTs and media is the user (Silverstone, 1994). But users, important agents as they are (Pacey, 1983), are not the only ones. Also important

are the producers and owners of the means of communication, the distributors, the publicity agencies and the journalists. It is the negotiation between all these actors that in the end leads to the mutual domestication of the internet and classic media, and ultimately to changes in power relations between the various media technologies (Day, 2001; Gallino, 2000; Muriald; 1998).

2.4.2 E-Commerce and the Mediatization of the Internet

The event of mediatization of the internet, and particularly focusing specifically on the invasion of the internet by newspapers, tries to construct all stages of e-commerce the process of spreading of news traditionally provided by newspapers and other classic media into the nooks and crannies of the internet and mobile phone networks. As the call for papers of the Troms Conference organized by COST A 20 (21-2 June 2002), the impact of the internet on the mass media in Europe declared that there are 10,000 sites that contain material that competes with content that was traditionally carried by the mass media. Little by little, the spread of information on the internet has invaded various kinds of virtual territory.

2.5 Use of the Internet by the Classic Mass Media and the Spread of News on Fixed and Mobile Network

For a long time going onto the internet for many traditional newspapers meant only and exclusively opening a website. Their reasons was clear: to make those well-educated middle to high income strata of the population who were increasingly drifting away from newspapers and becoming good internet navigators, continue opt use newspapers as

information sources. Many scholars list three stages of the invasion of the internet by newspapers (Magrim; 2002).

The first in the mid 1990s was that of the website as a display window, in which a version that was more or less the same as the site as the off-line newspapers appeared on the internet. At this stage, this was greater prudence on the part of editors in investing money in the internet. The idea behind it was that they could not afford not to be there. The second stage was a site that accompanied the traditional newspaper, but began to change in an attempt to exploit the potential of the new media. It was the point at which in-depth services, audio and video features and an archive were proposed. Strategies emerged regarding the role of the site as compared to the original paper. To avoid the dangers of the site cannibalizing the traditional newspaper, publishers aimed for a complementary relationship between online and off-line versions (Van der Wurff et al 2004). At this stage also, financial investment from publishers started to become more consistent (Mandelli 1999). The third and present stage is that of the mature site which has learnt somehow to use multimedial language and is struggling to find a strategy for economic return. But this classical reconstruction does not account for two previous stages, which are just as important. One pre-stage covers 1994 and part of 1995, and the other covers the second part of 1995 and the first part of 1996.

In the first pre-stage, recalls Leda Guidi from Perbole Italy:

The paper described the internet as a mysterious object, gave it in sensational aura, and certainly did not just give information about it. As a category, journalism came to the internet late, because initially they had been describing it as some king of subterranean monster. Only when they realized what sort of business was involved did things change for the better because they started to take upon themselves the great function of teaching the ABC of computers.

In the second pre stage the protagonist of information and of early computer and internet literacy were the media (and not the school system). Dailies and weeklies apart from offering continuous information as to their new technologies offered supplements for learning about computing and the internet. Pino Nicotin, a reporter for the L Espresso, agrees with this reading.

'sure the papers and journals from 1996 onwards have effectively had an important role in the new technologies. They have also done it with the clear aims of making profit, but the result has been a widespread commitment producing booklets in instalments which have been popular with readers. The paper entered this business in a moment of complete euphoria for the internet, for mobile phones, email, WAPs etc. Some papers were brought in great number on the days when there was a beginners computer course insert attached. It is a most point how good these insert are ... some are very good and have contributed to a certain increase in sales and credibility of the newspaper itself.

This pre-stage is important because it acts as sounding board as a publicity trailer for the new means of communication. Newspapers, if only to demonstrate that they are up-to-date will go to any length to inform, analyse, teach and use the internet thus helping to launch a new dangerous competitor. Their meaning must be read by other corporation organizations, as a growing garrisoning of virtual territory on the part of the classic mass media, whose purpose was to open and hold certain citadels (their sites) and live barricaded within them.

But at the same time, a silent but extreme widespread and important process is taking place on the internet: the spread of news outside the websites of newspapers and magazines. Journalist agencies, telecommunication companies, research engines, political institutions, publishers' parties, all have begun to give visitors a large offering of news. And this is not to mention independent sites or alternative sites, or blogs, which have assumed so much importance as regards counter-information.

2.5.1 E-Commerce and How the Fixed and Mobile Internet is Being Mediatized

According to Giulio Auselmi 2002, mediatization of the internet process involves both the fixed and mobile internet. However, the internet is now so inter-connected that to distinguish between fixed and mobile makes no sense. Virtually, spreading of the fixed internet starts from the media. Given the ever-growing costs of producing information the media has the idea of selling its products to as many customers as possible, then supply the same products not only to its classic subscribers (newspapers, television, radio, companies, institutions etc) but to reach all possible users directly. It starts with television (teletext service offer) and some television services for example supply information to airports and railways station websites. In general, (Giulio 2002) much information is second hand today (not only on the internet), because it is a re-wiring of news given by the media, passed through television and then beefed up and adapted to the various situations.

The media house is like a big information supermarket (Spitz, 2002), but together with the internet, has also to make a great leap forward. First, the media is an agency that

traditionally turned to experts, who then used specialized writing procedures (so as to facilitate research, for example through keyword). With the internet, the media also had to change the way of writing information and making it simpler because in this case it is no longer only for the experts (that is journalists who when rewrite, it adapting it to the style of newspapers and their own personal tastes). The difference in language aimed at the experts and the public is diminishing greatly nowadays, but up to four/five years ago it was much greater.

Our sourcing for information from other content providers and then using then on a fixed net is common, which forms 80-90% market. Many other enterprises buy content in order to make their websites more attractive, (Campish 2002) underlying the new role that the classic editors have begun to take on as 'content providers' for third parties. Which show how also in this sector as in many others, a strong thrust towards contouring is developing.

As regards the mobile net, it was the transition of GSM to the third generation mobile phone that signaled the evolution of its mediatization, the culmination of which is the ability to follow television news on a mobile handset. Interesting services already offered on GSM gives the user short news flashes at a cost. The user can choose to be informed in various ways (by means of sounds, flashing lights, vibrations and so on). The mediatization of the mobile net is removing the monopoly of handling news from the large television groups and the print press. In this process, 'mobile' consumption of information will have to pass through the art of selecting news (Roella, 2002).

A study in Italy by Autonella Roella (2002) on users analysis indicated that information mediatization was an element that could configure a certain number of different services and that therefore it was world running separately. The world of information in particular has an impact also on the services that can be offered. Clientele expected direct services. However, a big limitation in penetration of the world of information by the Mobil is the danger of information overload. To manage to personalize the information to the optimum, however is not easy, even if the limit of the means of communication itself impose the needs to select. The tendency towards personalization of information through the mobile net has become an increasingly popular idea.

2.6 E –commerce Communication potential in the online world

With popularization of the internet and expansion of the web, the traditional mass media encountered a new and complex mediated world in which specific features, different contents and diverse audiences. In popular discourse and everybody life, it soon become quite obvious if you are not online you don't exist at all; and television producers newspapers editors, journalists and internet providers had to react to these new challenges. Terms like digital convergences', 'online media', and 'non media' began to spread both in practice and also in scientific research. As a consequence, the question of the impact of the internet or classical mass media (hence the role of the media in influencing the adoption of e-commerce among corporate organization) has developed in a number of fruitful empirical studies and theoretical discussion (Dahlgren 1996; Hardt. 1996; Sparkes, 1996).

The internet, currently the most popular network of computer networks, offers a rich and complex communication environment that is still rapidly developing. Compared to the broadcast media, which transformed immediate dialogic exchanges to the narrow format of staged confrontations or broadcasts conventions, the internet leaves a much wider range of possibilities of carrying out debates on issues of interest in commerce. Although participants do not share a common space, the internet clearly creates a 'dialogical spaces' where participants can come together to discuss issues of concern. Accordingly, the idea of a new democratization of communication lies primarily in the new potentials of the dialogical computer mediated communication.

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2.7 Different Modes of Computer –Mediated Communication and E-Commerce

One of the central characteristics of the internet is that it converges different media forms into networks and enables different modes of communication. Taking into account the criterion of audience size and the type of enabled reciprocity between communicators, it is often argued that computer-mediated communication provides one-to-one, one-to-many, and many-to-many models of communication. In this way the internet plays with the boundaries that have traditionally delineated personal, interpersonal and mass communication (Burnett and Marshal, 2003: 48; Rice, 1999:26).

Several studies on the nature and characteristics of computer–mediated communication have provided many different communication models and typologies of computer interaction (Rafael and Sudweeks, 1997; Rice, 1987; Rogers, 1986).

A brief presentation of leading approaches to computer mediated communication offered by Burnett and Marshall (2003) provides a useful insight into the main findings within this research field. The approach developed by Rogers (1986) who distinguished between face-to-face interpersonal communication, interactive machine-assisted interpersonal communication and mass media, has been enriched by Little Johns (1999) categorization of four different levels of communication – interpersonal, groups organizational and mass communication. According to this typology, email offers interpersonal communication through mediated channels; listeners, discussion groups and IRC (internal relay chat) enable group communication between one sender and few receivers; whereas web portals belong to a group together with other mass media, where one sender maintains control over a mass audience through a mediated channel of communication.

The second approach by comparing internet interactions is offered by Shank's analysis of conversational types (Shank, 1993). In his opinion the traditional types of conversation-monologue, dialogue and discussion have extended with a new category of multilogue internet conversation; with an initial sender, multiple receivers who take turns as senders, but with loss of control of the conversation.

A third mode uses taxonomy of time and place (Ellis et al, 1993) and emphasizes the importance of messages and people involved in interaction. A third model therefore distinguishes between four types of communications. Synchronous distributed (telephone) and a synchronous distributed communication (letter).

A fourth approach is a sociovisibility taxonomy that looks at the number of senders and receivers on one side, and the public/private nature of interaction on the other (Paterson, 1996). Here, a type of public or private interaction is divided according to a socio-scale into dialogue, broadcast and multicast, form of communication. However, as Burnett and Marshall suggest in one of the above models fully describe the differences among the interactions in internet –based communication (Burnet and Marshall, 2003:52).

2.8 From Communication to Representation on the Web

This complex communication platform, which is being constantly formed and transformed within different contexts, shows that the problem of media convergence far exceeds the simple question of technological integration of different media formats. In contrast, one dimension that should be taken into account is the question of communicative convergence, which can be illustrated of reception. Convergence is therefore not just the question of coming together of all forms of mediated communication in an electronic, digital form driven by computers' (Pavlik, 1966:132), but can be understood as a *reflection of merging media practices*. Members of the audience can at the same time act as the producers of new content. It is not just the emergence of a new digital form that explains a new stage in media convergence. The internet is primarily a very complex communication platform, where new forms of media are emerging and one dilemma that remains to be studied is the question of the specific characteristics that make them both different and very similar to the classical mass media:

The web blurs the boundaries that traditionally distinguish one medium from another graphics, vides and audio can be presented via the web. Some internet resources are asynchronous, while others are synchronous. We argue that the web has evolved into a new inter active medium. It is

the convergence of many of the features of traditional media merged together into something new; a unique medium for communication. (Burnett and Marshall. 2003:57: emphasis added)

Compared to the electronic mass media, especially television, which in Habermas account brought about the refeudalization of the public sphere, new communication technologies offer resources for its revitalization. Two characteristics of communication processes are especially relevant in this context: *reciprocity and connectedness*. These are clearly present in computer mass communication. As argued by Slevin, mediated public space created by the internet is clearly a dialogical space (Slevin, 2000:184), where symbolic forms circulate from various participants as authors of individual messages. According to Slevin, “unlike the mass media, the Internet cannot so easily be dismissed as being non-dialogical”, because the interactive qualities of internet create new possibilities for participatory opinion formation (Slevin 2000:78). Moreover, the internet brings together and combines many phases of the communication process, for instance storage, exchange and interaction, reproduction and changing communication channels, to an extent which thus far has comparison. The internet is a register of information and a means for communication, and is specific also for its capacity to connect various agents effectively quickly and reciprocally.

However, some authors argue in this respect that the earlier predominance of conversational and more interactive forms of communication. Characteristic of newsgroup, mailing lists, bulletin boards and other electronic conferences have been recently supplemented by the paradigm of representations that are embodied in the hypertext system of web pages (Resnick, 1998). The website is now the typical element of contemporary cyberspace, although its function is not to replace the status of

computer-mediated discussion forum. Web representation functions primarily as new sites for information dissemination. The basic structure of representations is in general very different from the logic behind the more dialogical spaces. Creating and maintaining a successful, sophisticated website, which attracts a significant number of visits by other internet users, requires that sub-computer technologies clearly invite more graphic, expressive and monological means of expression, and open different ways of interaction and service.

Applying these specifics of the internet communication structure to the media landscape online means that with the interactive features ³ of online newspapers, readers receive opportunity to express their opinion, to exchange viewpoints and to participate in public life. Daily newspapers therefore not only *structure collective reflection on the issues of the day, but also extend the forum for discussion about these issues*. The significance of the internet representations is that they simultaneously enable passive reception as well as active and inter-active exchange over them. The question therefore remains, to what extent do web representations, which are constitutive for online versions of printed media, provide the dialogic, interactive forms of communication for their readers? One of the interesting novelties within the field of communication research is therefore to study the way new online media present themselves and their contents in this multiple communication platform.

2.9 Internet Connectivity in Kenya

The internet market in Kenya is eccentric mystified and totally inequitable as there are no set standards in the industry. With 77 licensed service providers in Kenya, 32 are estimated to be operational, thus competition is intensive. Pricing and quality service therefore drive the internet industry in Kenya. The internet customer has evolved; previously the customer had limited choices and low knowledge of the internet. Today the customer has a wider range of choice, is knowledgeable, demanding and more concerned with value for money.

In the first place the number of licensed Internet Service Providers (ISPs) nearly doubled from 47 at the end of 2000 to 77. In the same breadth, the number of internet subscribers hit the 60,000 mark spread in wider geographical locations unlike in the past where the concentration was on in the major towns.

There are two groups of internet customers in Kenya. One group is made up of the dial up customers who are price sensitive and are imprudent about other attributes. On the other hand, there are groups who put in a lot of consideration on value added attributes such as delivery/repose time, reliability and lavish after sale service. The former commands the larger market share and hence leads to most ISPs compromising quality service against price. As indicated by them, most ISPs seem to compete on price, which is not a sustainable strategy and could be suicidal for the business. This is because the low price alone, without commensurate production or promotion cost is a recipe for business disaster. It is also important to note that customers many value different attributes other than price and hence lower prices may not necessarily lead to higher volume.

The internet industry in Kenya also faces indirect competition through the mushrooming of information kiosks and cyber cafes. These kind of set-ups are not regulated and do not run on any set of standards. This opens avenues for unfair business practices and competition. However, an off shoot of this growth is the reduced cost of internet use, especially with the proliferation of cyber cafes in most towns.

The industrial growth experience infrastructure huddles due to the fact that Telkom Kenya a monopoly in the telecommunication sector in Kenya holds all ISPs at ransom. The growth of the industry is also restricted by lack of clear policy guidelines.

However Kenya still has some dependable ISPs who have continued to offer high quality services. Among the oldest ISPs who are well known and who offer high quality service include Kenya web com, which was the first ISP in Kenya. The Internet services offered include: mail category dial up, analogue leased line, digital leased line, internet and virtual private networks, internet advertising, website design and hosting, website maintenance, domain name registration, and webmail.

E-commerce facilitates growth in sales. With reliable structures and information technology investments, companies can expand their customer base beyond the borders leading to increased revenues and improved share price. This will in the long run contribute towards the country's economic growth and overall well being of its citizens.

There is not much in terms of documentation on e-commerce in Kenya. However, internet resources are plenty on search engines like AskJeeves.com, Altavista.com and Sosig.com. The Draft Kenya ICT Policy 2005 also provides some background on the ICT environment in Kenya. There are also reports available on e-commerce strategies for Africa available at libraries and various internet sites. There are reports available from regulatory bodies like the Communications Commission of Kenya, The Association of Internet Service Providers (TESPOC), the Kenya Network Information Centre (KENIC); internet service providers like Access Kenya and UUNet that will provide insight into the development of information technology in Kenya.

2.9.1 Distinction between E-Commerce and E-Business

Although “e-business” is a frequently used terminology, there is no fundamental definition of the expression as such. There are also attempts to differentiate between “e-commerce” and “e-business” in term of contents. Both expressions are often used synonymously. The expression “e-commerce” is limited to the electronic supported settlement of commercial transactions – sales transactions. “E-business” is represents the general approach and acts as the generic term for the electronic settlement of all communications and business approaches of a company via the internet. “E-business” therefore no only stands for the electronic settlement of businesses in terms of sales (e-commerce) and procurement (e-procurement) but also comprises those applications relevant for a company’s internal function sectors. Consequently, “e-commerce” is a partition of “e-business” (www.iwi.uni-hannover.de/lv/seminar_ss03/Link.htm).

2.9.2 The E-commerce environment in Kenya

There are no reliable statistics on levels of e-commerce in Kenya. However, there are some indicators available from the Kenya Network Information Centre (KENIC). As of mid-August 2005, there were 3000 .ke domains and 4000 .com domains registered in Kenya. These include commercial organizations, the government, non-governmental organizations and even a few individuals.

Internet usage in Kenya mainly involves messaging and academic research. E-commerce is still at the embryonic stage. Although there are no accurate statistics on levels of e-commerce in Kenya, a few corporate organizations like Kenya Airways have made a significant investment in information technology to support e-commerce. Through the website www.kenya-airways.com, one can check flight schedules, make a reservation and even pay for air-tickets by credit card. Kenya Power and Lighting Company recently launched an e-billing system where customers can check their electricity bills by sending their account numbers to the email address bill@kplc.com. Leading banks like Cooperative Bank of Kenya and NIC Bank offer limited electronic banking services. Hotel chains like Block Hotels and Serena Hotels have websites through which customers can check availability and make reservations. There are a few websites like www.mamamikes.com, www.mpenzi.net, www.legacybookshops.com and www.biashara.biz, which carry out business to customer transactions mainly targeting overseas retail buyers.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, a conceptual framework was presented with detailed theories of relevance to the purpose and research questions of this project. In this chapter the research process will be described. Specifically the research purpose, research method research strategy, data collection method, sample selection, data analysis and quality standards will be presented. Additionally, the considerations that have influenced the choice of methods and approaches will be presented.

The study is in three parts: an online survey looking at how the Nation Media Group and the Standard Group manifested themselves on the web; a series of individual interviews in which relevant respondents were asked for their opinions; and an insight on how new media use by the two mainstream media houses have changed perception, hence adoption by other organization in e-commerce aspects.

3.2 Site selection and description

The study will be carried out in Nairobi, Kenya where the headquarters of most Kenyan corporate business organizations are situated. Comparatively, Nairobi city hosts a highly skilled and dynamic workforce in unlike other major urban centres in Kenya. In addition, it has the most developed information technology infrastructure in country and is the hub of business in the Eastern Africa Region, ranking highly in relation to information technology and communication infrastructure in the African continent.

3.3 Research Design

The research purpose and research questions of this study indicate that this study is primarily exploratory. Exploratory research is suitable when a problem is difficult to structure and when there is uncertainty regarding what models to use and what characteristics and relations are important particularly in determining the extent of influence and adoption. This research is designed to allow an investigator to “look around” with respect to a phenomenon with the aim being to develop suggestive ideas (Reynolds, 1971). The study becomes somewhat descriptive as data is collected and analyzed. Descriptive research is often used when a problem is well structured and there is not intention to investigate causes/effect relation (Yin, 1989). These research designs have dictated the choice of research strategy.

The selection of research strategy depends upon the type of research questions asked, the extent to which the researcher has control over behavioral events, and the degree to which the focus is on contemporary events. Precisely, there are five primary strategies in the field of social sciences, experiment, survey, archival analysis history and case study (Yin, 1989). In this research the strategy used was determined in part, based on the formulation of the research questions. The most common forms of research questions are formulated on ‘how’ or why, hence the research benefits by using a case study. (Yin, 1994). This study is qualitative in nature, focusing on a contemporary issue.

The case study is generally superior when answering how and why questions about specific topic. When the researcher has little control over behavior events and when the events under investigation are contemporary phenomenon within real-life context, and in which, multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin 1989). According to Yin (1989) there is a distinction between single and multiple case study design in that evidence from multiple case studies also increase the validity of the researcher and create an opportunity to compare the cases (ibid).

Therefore, in order to address the research questions of this study the research is in two parts: an online survey looking at how the media in question have manifested themselves on web; and a series of interviews in which the relevant stakeholders identified in this study sample were asked for their opinions and insights on how the new media use by the media houses in focus have or may influence other organization to adopt e-commerce.

Cases involved were based on the media house websites and reportage in their both print and online. Additionally, it should be noted that the researcher has a certain pre-understanding of the studied institutions. Pre-understanding as described by Gummesson (2000) is a combination of two factors. One factor that contributes to the growth of one's pre-understanding is an individual's own personal experience from both private and working life. The other factor is the knowledge that has been obtained via intermediaries such as textbooks, research reports, and lectures. The combination of one's own and other people's experience comprises a store of knowledge that represents the individual's pre-understanding at the start of the research project (ibid).

Thus, it is important to note the aspects of the researcher's pre-understanding, which in this instance include personal experience with the institutions web site on the internet personal study library research and other people's experience to select the Daily Nation (Nation Media Group) and the East Africa Standard (The Standard Group).

3.4 Data sources and Data Collection methods

There are six sources of evidence available for use in collecting qualitative empirical data (Yin 1994); documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation and physical artifacts. A major strength of case study data collection is the opportunity to use several different sources of evidence (ibid). The use of multiple sources of evidence is called triangulation, which means that the researcher has the opportunity to obtain multiple measures of the same phenomenon, in turn increasing the validity of any scientific study. Findings or conclusions resulting from a case study are likely to be more convincing and accurate when based on several different sources of information. None of the different sources has advantage over the others. Because different sources are highly complementary as many sources as possible should be used. The data collection method used in this study included interviews, documentation and observations. Patel and Davidson (1994) claim that two types of data may be collected. Primary data was gathered for specific response to the problem through interviews, questionnaires and observation. Secondary data was obtained from various documentation particularly from content analysis of the newspapers, research reports and all reports books and articles. Secondary data may already have been collected for other purposes (Ericksson & Wiedersheim-Paul, 1999).

3.4.1 Significance of personal interview

Respondents were selected on account of their strength in focusing directly on the topic of the case study. As a data collecting method, interviews are one of the most significant sources for use in obtaining case study information. Specifically, the interview method allowed the researcher to focus directly on case study topic. Additionally, interviews are insightful in that they give perceived causal conclusion (Yin, 1994). Potential disadvantages with interviews include the threat of bias due to poorly constructed questions as well as the risk of reflexivity, meaning that the interviewee tells the interviewer on what he/she wants to hear (ibid).

A focused interview was used in this study. In a focused interview, the respondent is interviewed during a brief period of time with the purpose to confirm certain facts that are already known to the researcher about the two mainstream media houses in study. A focused interview also, enabled using a interview guide, to limit number of issues related to the conceptual framework presented in the previous chapter. The focus interview was also used to verify or dismiss the theories of the study. Personal interview for the key areas of the study was conducted in a face to face manner. Respondents were first contacted in the identified areas of the study to ascertain and assess their interest to participate, and also to judge their familiarity with the media organization in focus web site. Only those respondents who were aware of the web sites was chosen informed of the interviews schedule so as to prepare. The interviews lasted between 30 minutes and one hour.

3.4.2 Significance of questionnaire

The sample of this study included internet service providers, corporate organizations and the organization responsible for the management of the Kenyan county code top level domain space dot ke. These respondents are well conversant with e-commerce, and are key actors in influencing the adoption of e-commerce. For these reasons, questionnaires were administered to them by email.

3.4.3 Desirability of direct observation

Making a visit to the case study site provided the researcher with an opportunity for direct observation. According to Yin (1994) a field visit provide direct observation so long as the object being studied is not pure historical, some relevant behaviors or conditions will likely be available for observation and serve as yet another source of evidence, which often. is useful in providing additional information about the object that is being studied. For instance. this study is all about a new technology, and observation of the technology is important to the understanding of it. Direct observation of studied website and net objectives was conducted prior to interviewing the respondents.

3.4.4 Need for content analysis

As a form of secondary data, documents such as academic articles and previous studies on the research topic was used. This particularly involved content analysis of the Nation Media Group and Standard Group websites, which offered the advantage of being static and thus may be re-examined. According Yin (1994) documentation is exact, contains accurate references and other details with a broad coverage over time.

3.5 Sample design and sampling procedure

Collecting data in research, from all the potential units of analysis included in the research problem is often impractical. Therefore a sample has to be chosen to represent the relevant attributes of the whole set of units termed "population". However, due to the fact that samples are not perfectly representative of the population from which they are drawn the researcher cannot be absolutely certain that the conclusion drawn will generalize the entire population (Graziano & Raulin 1997).

According to Miles and Huberman (1994) examining contrasting cases can help further the understanding of a single case finding by specifying 'how' and 'where' the story concepts take place. Thus authors maintain that if finding holds true in one setting as well as another comparable setting, the finding may be said to be more robust. Furthermore, although contrasting cases are used, a sampling frame is needed. The sampling frame of this study consisted of and was drawn from both private and public institutions who have knowledge and use or offer related services, regulatory bodies, and media professional including IT specialists selected on the basis of interest in website ability to speak knowledgeably on website design and usefulness especial in commercial transaction events.

These people and based on the researcher's discretion, were chosen on assumption that they were able to provide rich information. Despite the potential threat to the data collected, all possible efforts were made by the researcher to ensure that judgment and

bias of the respondent comments and opinions were reserved, so that the authenticity of the thoughts and opinions voices by the respondents is held intact.

Often, the traditional research methods used in business research do not provide satisfactory access (Gummeso, 2000). Access in this sense refers to the opportunities available to find empirical data (real world data) and information (ibid). Thus, there are sometimes during research whereby a researchers' access to certain individuals may positively affect the quality of empirical data (real world data) and information (ibid). Therefore, there are times during research whereby a researcher's access to certain individuals may positively affect the quality of empirical data that is collected. Such are the respondents interviewed in this study.

Those identified as key informants in their respective organizations based on the relevance of their position and roles does not necessarily make them the "absolute best" people to interview, but rather those who the researcher can in good conscience determine are "good enough" to provide accurate empirical data.

Respondents were reminded of the purpose of the study and how the interview would be conducted and were advised to speak freely of their thoughts and opinion on the subject, stating that there was no right or wrong answers to the question posed to point the items that related to the new media and of most interests and concern to e-commerce.

3.6 Data analysis and presentation

The collected data was analyzed using mainly four different techniques.

First and foremost, there was pattern matching which involved an empirical based pattern with a predictable one. This was followed by the time series analysis that refers to repeated measures of the dependent variables in order to look at changes over time.

All the detailed steps were followed closely to eventually analyze the empirical data. Analysis of both within case and cross case was also used in comparison to the readily conceptualized literature. Data was presented through a cross case analysis based on the patterns of similarities and differences discovered in the data reduction and data display.

3.6.1 Validity and reliability

Quality standards validity and reliability measures were used to define exactly what concepts applied (Erckson and Wiedershein- Paul 1997). Yin (1994) identified three forms of validity constant validity and external validity.

It is important to establish correct operational measures for the concepts that are being studied and to ensure that objectives judgment is used to collect the data in construct validity checks. Three different tactics are used to increase construct validity (Yin, 1994).

These in practice involved the use of multiple sources of evidence, establishing a chain of evidence, and having key informants review a draft of the case study report. In this study, triangulation was used to gain multiple sources of evidence, which included documentation, observation and interviews. Secondly, the interviews and observation checklist was reviewed before/prior to the interview to ensure that the interview was understandable. Similarly the respondents had a view of the interview guide prior to the

interview itself so as to ascertain their means of preparation for the actual interview and to enquire about any misunderstanding if any before the schedule time. Note taking was also used to minimize the risk of missing out any important information for analysis hence enhance the construct validity.

The internal validity in this study was strengthened by the use of pattern matching during the analysis. Internal validity meant establishment of causal relationships, whereby certain conditions are shown to lead to other conditions, and it only concerned casual and explanatory study to try and determine whether one event led to another.

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Basically the empirical case, and precisely the pattern for each case was compared with the pattern predicted in the conceptualized literature (Yin, 1994). In this study, the internal validity is of most concern for casual and explanatory studies and is most applicable where conclusions are drawn, to discern whether the findings from a case study can be generalized outside the immediate case study (Yin, 1994).

According to Yin (1994) conducting a case study with such validity is most often problematic, thus he suggested a tactic for increasing the external validity of a case study, which involved testing theory through replications of the findings in other similar surroundings. If this kind of replication has been made, it might be possible to make generalizations on the findings to a larger number of similar cases (ibid).

In this study, the tactics suggested by Yin (1994) was followed to increase the external validity of this study. Hence the relevance of conducting two case studies for the sake of testing the relevant theories. However, the most important fact is the persistent difficulty to draw any generalized base on the findings of this study. The ability to repeat the operations of this study such as the data collection procedures, with the exact same result, as a measure that demonstrates reliability was of most importance. According to Yin (1994) the goal is to try to ensure that, other researcher later should come to the same results, should they follow the exact same method of and investigate the same case study.

Use of a case study protocol and development of a case study database are important aspects in increasing reliability (Yin, 1994). Yin (ibid) further indicated that reliability of observations may be increased commonly by having more than a single observations; by many observes making an observation, whether a formal or of casual variety.

In this study, an attempt was made to avoid leading and subjective questions by utilizing a structured interview guide so as to increase reliability. Although interpretation of data/answers might have possibly been subject to negative effects of some personal biases and hence a impact on reliability, efforts to avoid such biases was paramount, was ensured through developing a database through audiotapes and notes taking which eventually saved.

Noteworthy to say, is that, peoples perceptions and opinion vary over time and this too do affect reliability, thus making it difficult for the other prospective research work to achieve the same results even though the same sample group was to be used.

In this study however, a single research assistant was entrusted to conduct the interviews. This basically implies a slight possibility of negative impact of reliability of the general findings a case that possible is controlled by the numbers in external validity.

3.7 Problems, constraints and limitations of study

Problems encountered during the research included accessibility of respondents, and the fact that this topic was new to most of the respondents in spite of their employment/interests in information technology. In some cases, respondents failed to pay attention to the interviewer, and deviated from the topic, making the interviewer spend more time than planned for interviews. In other cases, the respondents were simply failed to avail themselves for interviews, causing delays in data collections. Three respondents failed to return questionnaires in spite of constant reminders. The researcher failed to administer the questionnaire at the Communications Commission of Kenya due to the level of bureaucracy at the institution. CCK is the regulator of the communications sector in Kenya. Without data from CCK, pertinent policy issues were not discussed.

Constraints of this study included the amount of time and resources required to reach correspondents. The cost of communication, especially by mobile telephone service, is

high in Kenya. For instance, the researcher spent over Kshs. 500 on air time in a futile attempt to secure an interview appointment at the CCK.

The main limitation of this study is the fact that the researcher was only able to observe the Nation Media Group as the main media source. The Nation Media Group has the most advanced media website in the country with a wide range of services available online, and has a large audience. The website was voted the best website in Kenya in 2005 by the Public Relations Society of Kenya.

The following chapter presents the analysis of data collected using the methodology detailed in this chapter in narrative and tabular form.

CHAPTER FOUR: DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at ways in which the media is using e-commerce in its operations, thus influencing corporate organizations to adopt the technology; opinions of internal and external publics on how the media are using new technology thus the potential to influence the growth of e-commerce in Kenya; opinions of service providers and higher educational institutions on the e-commerce environment in Kenya; and the challenges facing the growth of e-commerce in Kenya. This chapter links the literature review to the real situation on the ground.

The study is in three parts: a series of individual interviews conducted on media house staff (internal publics), and a series of interviews conducted on corporate organizations, internet service providers and institutions of higher learning (external publics) in which relevant respondents were asked for their opinions e-commerce; and an insight on how two mainstream media houses in Kenya are using new media, hence the potential to influence corporate organizations to adopt e-commerce.

Respondents within the media groups formed the internal publics. They included:

- Editors concerned with the online operation of print or broadcast media;
- National print press journalist including a columnist and a technology specialist;
- Those managing editing or writing for online news outlets, including aggregators and republishes of syndicated materials.
- Regional print press journalists.

The external publics included those respondents drawn from corporate organizations and institutions and organizations like:

- The communication commission of Kenya (CCK)
- The association of internet service providers (TESPOC)
- Kenya Network Information Centre (KENIC)
- Internet Service Providers like Access Kenya and UUNET (these serve mainly corporate clients)
- Individuals who engage in results related to information technology
- Institutions that train information technology professionals like the school of informatics and school of computer science at the University of Nairobi. Institute of Computer Studies of University of Nairobi,

The third and final part is manifested in documentation evident from a content analysis print media, on issues e-commerce. The internal public together represents the first case study and the external represent the second case study. The third and final case is from documentation and literature review and content analysis.

This data obtained was presented empirically noting the differences from the respondent opinions and the researcher observations.

This chapter looked at ways in which the media is using e-commerce in its operations, thus influencing corporate organizations to adopt the technology; opinions of internal and external publics on how the media are using new technology thus the potential to

influence the growth of e-commerce in Kenya; opinions of service providers and higher educational institutions on the e-commerce environment in Kenya; and the challenges facing the growth of e-commerce in Kenya.

4.2 Case one: internal publics

The second part of the study is a series of structured in-depth interviews with the media houses employees/staff; what the research describes as the internal public some well known, and some known only to other practitioners; technical and non-technical; online and in traditional media; front line and backroom; reporters and editors. These interviews seek to find out what issues related to the internet, rather the new media are of most interest and concern to journalists as for as news dissemination and e-commerce are concerned, and whether journalists see the internet as relevant to and perhaps changing their roles or roles as regards influence on other organizations to adopt e-commerce. Five journalists were interviewed.

The principal that this case study seeks to address whether journalism has a new distrust role in new media. the internet's potential to transform the face of public communication through interactive, collaborative, man-to-many exchange and hence e-commerce and yet the subsequent influence on other organizations new entry and adoption of the same.

This case seeks whether relatively early experiences and interpretations of online journalism throw up evidence that the internet can extend, improve or even is some way reform journalism in effect e-commerce and hence influence on others. Are we seeing the beginnings of a new order for the profession that have new ways to inform citizens

potential clients customers etc. and foster rational debate of particularly in commerce among other issues? Can journalists use the internet to perform their roles better, and can that impart on other organizations?

4.2.1 The object and shape of media web site

“Established news media, specifically the Daily Nation clearly have an important presence in the internet arena in Kenya”, one online editor quipped. Nation Media Group provide news and other related information on their website based on services associated with its organizations national and regional and services aimed to purely online (net) and other organizations institutions and groups. The site provides fully its own news and also partial contents (news feeds from outside sources).

The news feed is continuously updated or is frequently updated with intervals of breaking news panels. The sites also do an aggregation such as editing and representing of information from other media sources already in public domain, sometimes with hyperlinks to those sources, and in liaison to often on the site homepage, and in liaison to the old media, the site provides the most relevant news content on the net. An editor volunteered the fact that primarily, the feature of the mainstream media website focused both on general expansion of contents over an above that carried in their traditional print press media for each particular media in focus. These sites particularly the Daily Nation provided in-depth reports the specific provision of background, contextualizing or summarizing features that expanded on raw news in a way not technically or editorially feasible in print. In contradiction, however, he noted that in-depth reports were few and they appeared to be seldom replaced or updated. Conversely avers the editors, the online

outlets of traditional media, made disturbingly and marked little use of syndication or aggregation, despite potentials of such a policy for adding to their those two media houses proportion of news site: sites observed were

- Nation Media Group web site maintained by the organizations included the Daily Nation at www.nationmedia.com
- The Standard Group site that is maintained by the organization at editorial.

According to Chinese authors Zhou He and Jian-Hua Zhu there are three models for online newspapers. These are transmission interactive and full fledged community (He and Zhu, 2002) in the survey on the focus media we looked at the most salient features of both the Daily Nations and The Standard Group news websites to help the researcher decide to which group they belong. The sites were surveyed to discover the degree to which they offer interactive features and the characteristic of content that indicate an embracing of internet potentialities and contents in the sense additional or different types of content more frequent updates archives and searches relating to or that may foster e-commerce environment.

It may be argued that publisher or web managers rather than journalists are likely to have made decisions relating to these features. However such influence, also present in other media, relates to dynamics of media institutions. Whether the decision makers are considered journalists does not deflect from the fact that these are journalistic options.

The site as presented displays strong adherence to a web format. The IT specialist in a said that, while this is a necessary crude measure, it is readily apparent that this particular

web site has been approached with full commitment to web format, often as part of an automated system, and is not one that has been only cut and pasted in a less planned or resourced way.

“Websites of the biggest selling daily, The Daily Nation, most certainly not only shows advanced production values”, confirmed a news writer “but appears quite basic to the average reader with some browsing skills with efforts apparent in adapting print content for reading on-screen.”

“This site’s perhaps most striking apply basic standards that tend to apply in many regional online newspapers outside Kenya and also in sites aimed at audiences both within and abroad”.

4.2.2 Interactivity

A further content analysis by one of the IT professionals revealed that the Daily Nation website has an almost complete absence of links within its main stories. Remarkably, this may be that consideration of the resources required host links, as well as the perceived risk of directing readers away from one’s own site. There are only advertising links of specific companies on the media website being observed. Certainly, there was no attempt to emulate the links policies of major international online news providers.

Although website has an interaction forum, access is restricted to a specific level of membership. This locks out the average online reader from contributing to discussions, or even reading discussions among authorized contributors. It may be that the cost of monitoring such open forums, necessitated by fear of defamation suits discouraged their establishment. Reading the titles and the briefing, however gives one an overview of the contents of an article. Even placement of the texts contents on the side of the homepage is appropriate and expected to make reading easier. The colourful graphics including the

Daily Nation logo at the top of the placement is strategic and catches the attention of the reader.

An IT professional pointed out that the few links noted should be in bold and large typeface. This should be in consistency with the placement of the right side and bottom navigational bars on the home page respectively from page to page. Similarly, the graphics on the home page should be more noticeable. Most commendable were the colours used on the media houses' logos, particularly the blue and red for the Daily Nation. Blue is cool to the eyes and depicts serenity, peace, freshness and enhances clear vision. Black on the writing of the Daily depicts seriousness, stability and prestige, while red depicts vigour and warmth, making the site more attractive and exciting. A visitor's attention is held by the black text used for news headlines, news briefs and snapshots.

The IT specialists also commented on the news content on the site. Besides a general expansion of content over and above that carried in the traditional print media, this including links for and advertising other organizations, there were more in-depth reports, the specific provision of background, contextualizing or summarizing features that expand on raw news in a way not technically or editorially in print. The provision on in-depth reports in particular could be seen primarily to have been a feature of national news, headlines, although seldom placed or updated.

According to the IT specialists, navigation of the Daily Nation was simple and easy to follow because it was self explanatory. Although links are limited, they are well

organized in the navigational bars at the top. This also involved the use of search buttons which for the new user was convenient to access new areas or information in the site.

4.2.3 Media communication and Customer Support

According to the IT specialists interviewed, the site is a major tool, not just for providing news but as an object of customer support and communication between the media and their publics. The website provided current, future and perspective customers within and outside the country with a means to communicate. Information about the media group is readily available. The tool on headlines, news briefs, and breaking news provide external publics with current, recurrent and occurring news communication more directly. The IT specialist noted the frequency in movement could be seen from discrete print editions towards more frequent updates and beyond that, to a continuous or “wire” model. However, he avers that the pattern of the editions was firmly rooted in print or broadcast legacy. This particular respondent however noted that it is potentially misleading to impose an update frequency classification on the Daily Nation website, which noted, also been previously fixed edition or bulletin schedules. Noting that the site carries news feeds as well as regular updates, the breaking news element formed a significant proportion of total content. The site continuously provides communication reflecting reliability from such brought-in news feeds, and particularly through the provision of online edition date and timeframe plus reference. This information provision attracts visitors to the site. Financial reports, production information, specialized services provision attract specific publics such as business people and investors and those who are generally curious to know or learn more. Historical information, certain events in the world or in the media is also important source of attraction to the media site. The

Archive in the website denotes the provision of dated back-issues, while “search” on the website refers to the ability to search archives by key words and not so simpler site or wider internet searches found on many websites. On the media site, the public like to catch up with past event and gain knowledge of the readily embedded information in the media libraries. Archive and search tools are vital communication tools for retrieving content sources and research needs.

4.2.4 Publics Served by Media Websites and Interaction

The IT specialist, on observation about the public service of the media website gave reference to the fact that the publics are able to forward by email and print the online version of the newspaper.

During the interview with one editor concerned with the online operations of print and/or broadcast media, discussions of interactivity centred on the possibility for email communication with journalists, message boards and hyper-linking. In a case with an online journalist, he saw that these possible features were seen as a “good thing” for public service. He regarded positively the inclusion of journalists email addresses in online media. However, differences emerged between the editor and the journalist to where journalists should be obliged to individually correspond with readers by this means, or whether a central gateway for email feedback should be generated. Email in particular was welcomed by many internal publics interviewed, as a positive addition to communication with readers, more immediate and more commitment that ‘letters to the editor’ as is the case with print media.

A regional print journalist, and now an online journalist, expressed his openness towards the interaction with readers to say that people not being able to contact journalists just goes against everything journalism is all about. A national print press journalist who is also a columnist and technology specialist, distinguished between two possible types of interactivity saying it is not much a loop of reader talking to writer or publisher as readers talking to other readers. He also related development online to more general developments as journalism increasingly blurred the boundaries between news and comments, external input was more necessary. The more you let a reader into the loop, the more you are likely to get the truth.

A journalist writing for an online newspaper said that the question of interactivity on the media website is in the heart of journalism and its values, especially as it is related to the notion of journalistic objectivity. He said that no one believed that journalists, and therefore the media website, was not involved in a process of very sharp value judgments being made all the time. Response via the internet was therefore an important part of forming the journalist's process of seeking the truth. There is an engagement – it is a two way process. He said he received a high volume of responses to his work via email, and that much of it was well informed.

One aggregator and re-publisher of syndicated material said there was more for interaction with readers by online journalists, to elicit direct information dissemination, hence e-commerce. However, he did not give specific examples of how this happened.

A more instrumental view was put forward by a respondent working with the Standard Newspaper, who said that email feedback was essential to defining who the audience was especially when catering for online customers/ clients. You will have no standing, and will not be taken seriously as a reputable news provider hence the need to go online.

4.3 Case two: external publics

Respondents were also drawn from institutions and government organizations, training institutions, internet service providers and the commercial sector. Before the interview, each respondent was reminded of the purpose of the study, how the interview would be conducted, and was handed a copy of the interview guide (see appendix).

The venue of the interview was set such that the respondent had access to the media website and was free to make use of the website to illustrate their views, thoughts and opinions pointing or highlighting on items of internet and relevance to e-commerce features of transmission, interactive and fully fledged community effects (He and Zhu, 2002). It is important to note that the group was not large enough to draw meaningful distinctions between the expressed perceptions of sub-groups.

It should also be noted that in this section, the data presented includes data collected from interviews with the internal publics and external, comprising of topics covered interviews in both focused on the broad issues under study reviews. This includes other study details noted from the literature review documentations with regard to the conceptual framework

and as investigated by researchers direct observation of the sties as presented by the media and as perceived by the external publics.

4.3.1 Objective of the Media Website Design

According to a respondent, the spatial and time factors along with other more specific factors (economic, political) have helped to rapidly spread the use of the net. Suddenly today, in fact the worldwide Web has become the platform towards which users massively rush for information. With such information demand what the answer that the media on the internet, and the online newspapers in particular need is a deep and organization anticipation, which translates into diverse problem solving. These intertwine in the technological foresight in terms of land out infrastructure for the anticipated service demands. He said that the internet has to respond to a sudden multiplication of traffic. Such services that monitor the browsing speed in the web point at the fact that the net is a whole respond satisfactorily to the test.

Further investigation on whether and how online newspapers and in particular whether the media website has an informative and critical role to play in disseminating information to corporate organizations on the infrastructural capacity, he argued that the internet has become a global information medium on its own. A multitude of people use the internet directly, land particularly by offering links to other sites as well, and thereby open up more diverse information sources for users. The analysis of the media website on the standard, national broadsheet newspapers that provide facts, background information analysis and opinions on all current affairs, economics, including political events that may interest the general public are included and provided for. The respondent observed

that analysis of the website showed that they types of content offered are news, advertisements, self-promotion, two kinds of pointers and communication elements. As noted, news is the single most important type of contend offered. Advertisements are also important both in terms of reader interest and in terms of their contribution to the financial performance of the website newspapers. It was noted that self-promotion was used to market the print newspapers.

Pointers are references or hyperlinks that bring readers to other pages in the outlet or to other outlets. The respondent also observed that there were:

- (i) Pointers to news, background information and others content items that are offered by the publisher and
- (ii) Printers to non-content services, like e-commerce, finally offering readers and journalists' opportunity to interact. They include letters to the editor, chat rooms and other elements that presents interactions between readers, or between readers and the newspapers.

According to this respondents analysis of the media website online news services differ from the print news. The on-line news devotes a lot of space for pointers that refer to non-news content items. These include e-commerce services, to page on other websites and to commercial information deeper within the website. Again these finding confirmed to the respondent to establish a deduction that references to other sources are a distinctive characteristic of the online news environment in the media website.

Asked about the news items of the media website, one web enthusiast and regular user observed that naturally he believed that in most cases, online articles should be shorter, presented in an abbreviated 'news item' style and linked to other online features. On his own account, he said he preferred to use electronic newspapers to acquire immediate information on global issues and to survey; headlines. However, the researcher in this study has investigated these preferences by the website user and through observation personal observation shows that some online news offer in depth information contrary the observation trade by one user on opportunities and preferences, there would be expectations having differences in news topic, and geographical orientation in story typing and authorship factual reports and quick comments that services users with immediate news, stories to a large extend built around news agency footing and press releases. On the other side, it would be expected that analyses portraits, reportage and in-depth editorials written by the offline own journalist would be synonymous to print media.

However, according to by one observant respondent and website specialist analysis at the service providers, the media website of interest in this study compares with other international outlets in many facets. The site contains story briefs, introductions to main stories contained in other pages, graphics, and new stories.

On some instance, 'others' category encompassed all other possible news, ten formats, including reportage, comments, portraits, cartoons column. This analyst noted that most often the news story on the front page not only provides information, but acts as guide to other pages with information. He also noted that the geographical coverage for the online

and print newspaper is very similar focusing equally on national and international news, local news. According to this analyst, links are the most important and his favorite features on the media website because they offer more opportunities and preference for information.

It is easier to identify different groups of links with a possibility to link information on print media edition, broadcast media (radio or television sites), to other public institutions, private organizations information, and to other community sites. As concerns the researchers own observation regarding the site role in providing information to diverse publics, it indicates that the net serves several functions at the same time.

The front page markets the print newspapers, provides short news items and guides the reader on other contents items on the same website, and sometimes on other websites. The homepage covers more or less the same geographic areas as the news items on the print front page. However online newspapers differ from each other in the functionalities they offer rather than in content. The researcher own observed that despite the potential to employ tools of online form, bulletin boards, and chat discussion groups, the website users and their probable effects on enlarging the conditions of public expression, publicity and public opinion is yet to be exported, nevertheless mentioning how clear and easy it is to use the sight.

Although the various respondents do not share a common space, their observations about the website clearly centers a 'dialogical space' a potential possibility that can see the

participants come together to discuss issues of common concern. This fact reinforces the researchers observation and assertions that the central characteristic of the media website hence generally, the net is that it converges different media forms into networks and enable different modes of communication in this context the researcher observation is base on the criteria of audience size and the type of enabled reciprocity between their observation about the site particularly comfortable to the eyes, graphics, page size in the navigator window and how they understand to usage of sites various tools, the speed and functionality during the interview session.

4.3.2 Public communication and representation on the Web.

At the level of production of the media website contents, one web designer and professional user of the net for results said that the media website has very high characteristics of communication besides the technology itself. He noted also that the main communication processes on the net are relevant to the public in the two contexts of reciprocity and getting them connected. It has created publicity to different participants mainly as the authors or providers of information or individual messages and audience who are the recipients.

Thus among the recipients are they general public, media stakeholders and shareholders, private and public organizations. Citing these groups the respondents noted specifically, the information seekers who double up as customers and prospective customers, because the mediated publicity is interactive in nature. He said that the website attracts different publics and brings together and combine many phases of the communication process for instance storage of information, exchange and interaction, reproduction and changing

communication channels. This particular respondent observed that the website representations of the media, functions as for information dissemination. A respondent from UUNet commended that “creating and maintaining a successful, website such that of the Nation Media Group, which attracts a significant numbers of visitor by internet users requires both substantial dedication and distinctive technical skills”.

The researcher’s observation of the media website noted that the network of interconnectedness, computer technologies clearly invited more graphic among other attractors, expressive and monological means of expression, and a further open different ways of interaction; and service.

In this context, the researcher’s observation shows that applying the specifics of the website or rather, the internet communication structure to the media site landscape online means that with the interactive features of online newspapers, readers, or generally the visitors receive opportunity to express their opinion, to exchange views points and to participate in public life. Specific to these could be the email.

According to the researcher observation the significance of the web site representation the significance of the Web site representation is that it simultaneously enable passive as active and interactive exchange. Therefore the media website do not only structure collective reflection on the issues of the day, but also extend the forum for discussion about these issues among the publics.

The main question therefore was for the researcher to observe to what extent do the media Website representations of the public which are constitutive for online version of print media provide the dialogic interactive forms of communication for their readers, visitors, publics.

The following table shows the way the Content Analysis or online media presents themselves and their contents in this multiple communication platform as observed by the researcher.

Publics	Representation/ Interaction with?	Publics	Representation/ Interaction With?
News seekers	Readership	Shareholders	Yes information on Financial results
Local Business Community	Yes has link to corporate organization such as S&L	Suppliers/vendors	Yes, sale report and tendering information
Potential Employees	Yes, there are job Advertisements	Government	Yes, major information on policy and public affairs
Learning Institutions	Yes has links to some school advertisement e.g. St. Andrews School	Media(Rival media)	Syndicated materials and analysis of reports
Money market	Yes Has links to the exchange rates		

Table:1

The analysis on the above table starts from the observation that the media website publication and information provision is regularly and frequently updated editorial information advertisement on other types of content and each which offers different levels and types of interactivity features and hence different opportunities and preferences.

The researcher own observation however indicate that the website provided considerable links but little interactivity or multimedia features apart from radio and television version. On the analysis of the front pages of the news online on the website the researcher had the following initial assumptions

- To keep the content analysis manageable the front page had to be analyzed. The front page contain those news items and those other content items that the editor consider the most important and illustrative for the content offered by this service, and therefore appropriate for the analysis for the morning and evening editions. (e.g. 9 and 10 a.m. and 8 p.m.).
- It was expected that the layout of the website does not change rapidly and that the content offered at the study time were similar to those offered on other days.
- It was expected that the news offered on the front page of the website reflects the choice that the editors make, given the supply of information on these study period, and also on the basis that since national print and online news services are in principle confronted with the same supply of newsworthy events, that differences in the type of information presented inform us about differences in the news selection by editors.

The researcher's observation of the website indicates that information is provided to the Public by the means described in table below.

Category of Information	Provided?
News release	Yes
News headlines	Yes
Archival stories	Yes
Special features & suggestions	Yes
Advertisements	Yes
Financial reports	Yes
Business news	Yes
News breaks	Yes
Briefs & news filters	Yes
Product Information	Yes
Current quote sheet	Yes
Syndicated information	Yes
Exchange rates	Yes
Digest of coverage by other media	Yes
Information	Yes
Briefs & news filters	Yes

Table: 2

The researcher's observations of the media website investigated indicators of service to the online customer's /public are shown on the table below.

Service indicators	Applied/used
Archival information	Yes
Product Sales	Yes
Suggestion outlets	Yes
News outlet	Yes
Product information	Yes
Action graphics	Yes
Periodic news break	Yes
News briefs	Yes
Financial reports	Yes
Advertisement	Yes
Marketing information	Yes
E-mail addresses	Yes
Exchange rates	Yes
Opportunities for employment	Yes

Table: 3

4.3.3 Gains Made by Advertisers using Media Websites as a Channel to Reach Customers

As mentioned in the literature review, internet commerce can substantially improve productivity by lowering transaction and production costs, facilitating market entry, improving customer services extending geographical coverage and enabling a new potential source of revenue (Yoshio et al., 2001).

Media websites have large audiences. The Nation Media Group website records an average of 4,430,719 views per month. Advertisers use the website to reach potential customers through links to the websites of the respective businesses. These website, for instance, Sarova Hotels, allow customers to view facilities and make online bookings. At the time of data collection, the online booking facility was not functional. However the website allows customers to contact offices to make bookings. The Kenya Airways website allows travellers select preferred flight schedules and gives the option of paying online or through a Kenya Airways office. Other businesses have made gains through the publicity the Nation Media Group website.

MamaMikes.com allows for individuals to purchase goods online and have them delivered within Kenya. This service is mainly targeted at overseas buyers wishing to send goods to people in Kenya. Customers also have the option of paying for goods physically.

These examples demonstrate the potential that media websites have on promoting the growth of e-commerce in Kenya.

4.3.4 Challenges facing the Growth of E-Commerce in Kenya

In the literature review, we saw that although e-commerce potential appears promising, many challenges still remain. Barriers to e-commerce are to some extent the same as those for internet use in general. But several of the challenges are specific to e-commerce, and they include the need for a legal and financial framework for internet transactions and the provision of market transactions and the provision of market access and trade logistics. Developing countries aiming to promote e-commerce would have to work, in the short term, on improving communication infrastructure and accessibility, and adjusting the legal, financial and logistical conditions to the new requirements of online trade. In the long term, they would certainly have to address some of the improved education and computer skills (Yoshio, 2001).

The two case studies demonstrated the potential of the media website to serve as models for e-commerce. Respondents from three corporate organizations recognized that e-commerce is the way for any business today. However, there are challenges that are hampering the adoption of e-commerce in Kenya.

Five respondents from the corporate sector stated that one of the main challenges facing the growth of e-commerce in Kenya is high internet costs. It is one thing to invest in equipment, and another to afford internet services. Jonathan Somen, the Managing Director of AccessKenya and the Vice-Chairperson of TESPOK, in an article written in

the Financial Standard of the East African Standard of 22nd August 2006, emphasized on the importance of increasing local content to reduce the cost of internet service in Kenya. A big proportion of the cost of providing internet services is the cost of the international bandwidth connecting ISPs in Kenya to the rest of the world. Costs in Kenya are higher than in North America and Europe. It is important for Kenya to be connected to the rest of the world to facilitate communication in and out of the country. One way of reducing the cost of connectivity for Kenyans is to encourage local content and increase the use of locally based websites among local users. Buying bandwidth within Nairobi is significantly cheaper than buying international bandwidth.

According to Mr. Somen, one of the drivers of local content is e-commerce comprising both B2B and B2C. The growth of local e-commerce websites will encourage e-commerce both at retail (for example the Nation Media Group) and commercial level.

However, there is a major problem with the expansion of e-commerce sites in Kenya as pointed out by respondents from the internet service providers. Credit card companies are reluctant to allow companies in Kenya to charge credit cards online and in many cases will not accept written or even faxed authorizations. These companies insist on cards being swiped mainly out of fears of fraud. This defeats the idea of doing business electronically. Security of e-commerce has not been fully addressed. In this regard, considerations need to be given in the issue of digital signatures and the establishment of a key public infrastructure. These elements of security ensure that both the consumer and the providers are safeguarded and mitigate from cyber insecurities. With only two banks supporting electronic transactions (Kenya Commercial Bank and Barclays Bank), and

without legal systems to protect them from fraudulent transactions, credit card companies need to lobby for policies that can support e-commerce in Kenya. This is one way in which the media can partner with corporate organizations to foster the growth of e-commerce in Kenya.

Another challenge facing corporate organizations is the rapidly changing global IT environment. One correspondent indicated that most organizations are slow in adopting emerging technologies. In addition, academic institutions are teaching archaic technologies that limit learning. When graduates enter the job market, they are forced to re-train. As a result, the region is saturated with unsharpened technical personnel who are unable to meet the market qualifications. This impacts negatively on the quality of services providers in the IT industry.

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Public institutions of higher education offering IT courses are facing challenges in meeting current market requirements in the courses they offer. Due to problems of funding, the institutions are unable to constantly upgrade equipment and curriculum. The dynamic nature of IT requires that teaching staff are sent abroad, to more advanced learning centres, to update their skills. This is expensive. However, scholarships are made available to enable teaching staff undertake courses in institutions in advanced countries. The Kenya Education Network (KENET) provides awareness of the industry to academic institutions aimed at encouraging the uptake of ICTs and demystifying the internet and computing. However, KENET is unable to influence the courses taught at these institutions.

Kenya recently liberalized internet services meaning that service providers no longer have to go through Jambonet to channel communication (data and voice) in an out of the country. Although this is a step towards encouraging the growth of e-commerce, the gains are yet to be fully felt. The pace in is slow, and where it has taken off, enforcing and educating corporate organizations and the general public is not being done.

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, public awareness on IT related subject is limited. One respondent pointed out that the media in Kenya is commercially driven, therefore IT does not form part of topics catered for under corporate social responsibility. Therefore, all IT awareness activities to be publicized by the media are commercially charged. Other than occasional articles in the Business Weeklies, all other IT articles and features are paid advertisements.

4.4 Online Survey of Media Websites

First and foremost the survey of online news site (including those of broadcasting) for the media houses on focus was conducted with a view to assessing their adoption of internet features and the test how much they had incorporated features that seeks to extend their journalism and business, hence e-commerce beyond the limits of established traditional media. In all, the study covered two websites that represent the interview: The East African Standard and The Nation Media Group.

4.4.1 Observation of the East African Standard Website

This website only carries the print section of the Standard Group media services – the East African Standard. The broadcast section of the Standard Group, the Kenya Television Network, is still constructing its website.

The East African Standard website is very basic and offer readers access to the daily version of the online newspaper. There is an archive section that allows readers view back copies of the online newspaper. These are free services. Paid services available on this website include digital newspapers and advertisements.

Advertising: Advertising space is available on the East African Standard website. However, the researcher was unable to obtain the advertising rates. It is important to note that advertisements are only placed on the home page of the website. The inner pages have articles only. One interesting advertisement on this website that demonstrates the powers of e-commerce is www.mamamikes.com. This website enables those both within and out of Kenya to purchase airtime from Celtel and Safaricom; shopping vouchers from Nakumatt, Tusker Mattress, Yaya Centre and Village Market; and fresh flowers. These goods are then delivered to the beneficiaries. There are about 1,500,000 people using this service. Payments are made by credit card or money order. Credit card payments are however more reliable for those living out of Kenya.

Digital newspapers: Readers may purchase copies of the East African Standard through NewStand, an international service that delivers digital newspapers to readers. Subscriptions are available for US\$54 for a three month period, US\$108 for a six month

period and US\$216 for a 12 month period. Each of these subscriptions come with 5, 14, and 36 free issues respectively. Digital newspapers are easy to access (one can flip through and skim headlines on the computer), easy to read (one can zoom-in on articles, picture and graphs), flexible, portable (can be read off-line, anytime and anywhere), compact (past copies can be stored on one's computer for future reference), and efficient (one can move to sections and embedded URLs with a single click).

4.4.2 Observation of the Nation Media Group Website

The Nation Media Group Website offers a range of products for readers, both locally and internationally. Some of these are paid services, while others are free of charge. Paid services include advertising, Nation Mobile, digital newspapers, online business directory, The Weekly Advertiser, archive services, and RSS (Really Simple Syndication). Free services include access to all sections of the day's online newspaper and access to other Nation Media Group's products such as the East African, The Monitor (the daily newspaper in Uganda), information on Nation Television (NTV) and a subscription to a free weekly email newsletter. Also accessible is investor information – very crucial for those in business, and information on the Nation Media Group.

Advertising: Advertisers, in most cases businesses, may buy space either on the online newspaper, or on the email newsletter at competitive rates depending on the positioning and type of advertisement placed. The cheapest advertisement on the daily print newspaper (one eighth of a page in black and white) costs Kshs. 33,176 while the most expensive print advertisement (full page in colour) goes for Kshs. 444,744. Advertisements are charged according to the position it appears in the newspaper (inner

pages, cover pages, or with main news items), the day of the week the advertisement appears, and if the advertisement appears in black and white, or in full colour. Online advertisements costs are affordable even for the small businesses. The cheapest advertisement costs Kshs. 25,000 and the most expensive costs Kshs. 208,800. Again, the rates depend on the position of the advertisement. Advertisements that appear on the home page cost more than those that appear in the inner pages. Again, the cost of the advertisement depends on the size in pixels. The main advantage of the online advertisements is that the audience is big and can be from any part of the world, and the advertisements appear for the duration of one month. Normally, these advertisements provide links to the advertisers websites and enable customers buy goods online. With the website recording average views of 4,430,719 per month, the audience is guaranteed. Print advertisements appear only for the day for which the advertiser paid, and the audience is limited to those with access to the daily print newspaper.

The Nation Media Group has a weekly E-newsletter that advertisers may buy space in. Costs are Kshs. 58,000 per email shot. Readers subscribe to this newsletter, hence the audience depends on the number of subscriptions and how functional the service is. Presently the e-newsletter service is not functional.

The Nation Mobile: In an effort to reach news audiences faster than other media houses, the Nation Mobile enables subscribers receive breaking news instantly on their mobile telephones at a fee of Kshs. 10 to Safaricom subscribers and Kshs. 50 above operator costs to Celtel subscribers per news break. Subscribers may also access this service at a

cost of Sterling Pound 1.50. This service has been outsourced to a local company called Cellulant Ltd.

Digital Newspapers: In collaboration with NewsStand, the Nation Media Group has made it possible for overseas readers to purchase digital versions of newspapers. The digital papers are available from www.newsstand.com, under Africa publications. NewsStand delivers digital copies of newspapers and magazines-in the same format as the print issue to customers around the globe. This is also useful for readers in remote parts of Kenya such as Turkana to receive “news”. Often, newspapers are received here the day after, subjecting readers to stale news. NewsStand digital publications uses signposts such as size of headlines, sub-headlines, and consistent locations types of content to make it easy for readers to navigate the newspaper. Purchases can be made using credit cards at a fee of US\$ 20.25 per month, US\$ 58.50 per quarter or US\$ 0.75 per daily. Monthly and quarterly buyers get a limited number of free copies of the digital newspaper.

Online Business Directory: The Nation Media Group hosts an online business directory of businesses located in Kenya. This service is provided at a fee. Advertisers may use this service to reach potential customers both locally and from any part of the world. Potential investors and traders from other parts of the world may use this as a research tool when looking for business opportunities in Kenya.

The Weekly Advertiser: Advertisers may advertise goods and services for sale, and receive inquiries from customers through this website. This is particularly useful for small businesses and for those without websites to support e-commerce transactions. Advertisements are classified according to categories and also according to “how hot” they are. Advertisers may also place conspicuous advertisement on the homepage at a premium fee.

Archive Services: Readers may access articles in past editions of newspapers. However, premium articles are available at a fee. Normally one would go to the Nation Media Group library to purchase these archives.

RSS: This is an XML file that can be read by special feed reading software or a web service available on certain web-browsers. This offers an easy way to keep up with stories the minute the website is updated throughout the day. RSS automatically updates as stories across the website are added, alerting readers of news as it breaks. Readers are automatically alerted on their computers if they are online. However, this service is not functional.

This chapter looked at ways in which the media is using e-commerce in its operations, thus influencing corporate organizations to adopt the technology; opinions of internal and external publics on how the media are using new technology, thus the potential to influence the growth of e-commerce in Kenya; opinions of service providers and higher

educational institutions on the e-commerce environment in Kenya; and the challenges facing the growth of e-commerce in Kenya.

The following chapter draws conclusions on the issues mentioned above, suggesting ways in which these challenges can be overcome.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, data gathered from two case studies were presented. The study took the common terminology “the Media website” as its departure and went on to explore how a small sample of respondents described their interaction with the media website. In doing so, the study design assumed that the respondents would be familiar to a degree, with such terminology from their visit to the websites. Moreover, the respondents were placed to offer concrete accounts of the website as experienced and enacted. In addition to addressing the role of the website, the individual interviews were chosen as the method data collection in order to probe for specific nuances of the website as well as to tap a range of personal and professional experiences with interactive media (Kvale, 1996, Marshal and Rossman, 1999).

In addition to looking at the media website and its functionalities, the researcher looked other factors that influence the e-commerce environment in Kenya. The media has a role, beyond operating a state-of-the-art website, in influencing corporate organizations to adopt e-commerce. Later in this chapter

The respondents were selected so as to represent a reasonable spread of descriptions. The constituted a theoretical sample (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002; Miles & Huberman, 1994) with reference to different types of organizations and different web users organizations – designers and users.

The main data set as seen consisted of in-depth interviews lasting approximately 30 – 60 minutes each which were then transcribed verbatim. The aim was to establish the conceptual, distinct nature and features of the media websites and categories of factors that inform the respondents needs for and/ or service. An in-depth analysis of the full set of interview scripts was carried out. First, heuristic coding was conducted (Silverman, 2000: 170). Compared with coding as traditionally understood (which assigns terms, assertions and other linguistic units of fixed and mutually exclusive categories), the purpose of heuristic coding is to organize large and complex textual data into structures to allow for retrieval and analysis, rather than closing it around a definitive system.

Secondly, a central purpose of the analysis was to identify nuances of the respondents understanding of the objective of the media website by description, services, interaction and design in use. While some terms were proposed in the interview guide, others were introduced or re-developed by the respondents as part of their arguments and narratives in accordance with the classic quantitative research strategy of seeking the ‘native perspective’ (Malinowski, 1922). The analysis drew on the tradition of linguistic discourse analysis (Wetherell, Taylor & Yates, 2001), which allows for a detailed explication of how people verbally articulate, for example their professional competencies, personal identities and their general overviews.

The approach, further, is a candidate for developing more procedural and explicit forms of qualitative data analysis which, so far, have been a weak point of qualitative tradition

(K. B Jesen, 2002b). In this study, the present analysis gave special attention to three features of discourse, so as to draw thereafter, general conclusions regarding each research question:

- Semantic categories – the respondents' description of the distinction features of the media website
- Arguments – what counts as arguments concerning computers and other media websites, whether of technological or social nature and what the respondent takes for granted as premises of their arguments;
- Narratives – the kind of stories that respondents tell to make their point, and the contexts in which they are introduced.

It should be noted from the onset that in this study, the interview methodology necessarily focuses on the respondents' immediate as well as explicit understanding of both the media website features and particular use. The value of interviewing for the present study is that it facilitates reflection on such immediate understanding as expressed by interviewees in surface structure, terminologies, and categories of media websites (extrapolated from Chomsky, 1965) and as supplemented by their broader accounts of access and use.

This approach of data collection leads to analysis, interpretations and inferences regarding deep structure, conceptual categories and frames of references, influence and adoption by other organizations. According to Beyer and Trice (1982), adoption includes the set of behaviour through which decision makers decide that the internet may be useful

for their organization. The outcome of the adoption process is that organizations have websites that provide information. The behaviour in the adoption is about sensing and searching, affective reactions, selection and the (formal) adoption. This specific behaviour relates to general organizations process and components of behaviour.

According to this study, the researcher alongside respondents noted that the media website features are interactive with features that link to other information. Measures of adoption look at indicators that point to the acceptance and its uses in an organization (Algamene and Rekenkamer, 1997). However, in this study, only articles that could be explained in a meaningful way by the respondents and researcher's personal observation by using indicators in the media website are included in the discussion and conclusion. It is so in the case when it is technically feasible to describe the media website to determine design objectives, the audience and public service provision, hence the potential e-commerce. In this study, the respondents were asked about these specific areas and with indications from the media website.

In this study, a second way of looking at the influence and adoption is to look at formal documented features rather than those central to the media website in focus (Boyne and Law 1991; Hyndman and Anderson, 1995; and Johnsen, 1999a). In essence, as have been observed in this study, the website is an instrument for external communication to stakeholders. Inclusion of links to other information shows adoption because most range from organization activities and products.

5.2 Objective of the media website

In their initial reflection, the respondents distinguished two major objectives and aspects of the media website as provision of information and the media product specifications.

References were made to visitors receiving something in return for visiting the websites.

The ideal outcome of this exchange was described by a website designer as unique presentation to a particular human user, being the products of a sequence of choices within a specific context of relevance.

Examples indicate that both the internal and external respondents drew freely on their experience with the media website for electronic mail (email), information, entertainment, discussion groups (chat groups), online shopping (view catalogues and order products), newsgroups, research tool, advertising or trade tool, as a communication tool to serve customers and suppliers. Communication to clients and other collaborators was observed as an important factor, thus assigning the media website to the role of a more or less incidental tool. Passing of information was noted as indicative of human elements of meaning and emotion – thus the website had a lot to do with exchange of message and feelings.

One feature highlighted as a means of interactivity is the visual branding of a website if it is explicitly a project of a particular company/ organization profile and consistently support users as noted on the media website.

One additional aspect of organizational communication is the set of interrelations which an organization will seek to maintain with other organizations as well as with the public

at large (Cheney and Christensen, 2001; Finet 2001). In this study, while focusing on internal communication, the interviews briefly addressed the respondents' understanding of such external relations and the place of the website in maintaining them. First of all, organizations seek to speak with one voice.

The media houses, being big corporate organizations, need not just make statements to the public, but instead dedicate the task of the communication departments to address more general issues on behalf of the media house. External publics are also understood as a source of information that can be placed on the internet. Website communication is important and is used on one hand for the clients as the key external relations, and on the other hand, to the general public.

In addition to such specific efforts at interacting with the wider social setting, the respondents articulate an on-going awareness of how others perceive the media as an organization.

On the study assumption that the media has a role in educating corporate organizations on the gains of engaging in e-commerce, in this study and in response to its external initiative, the media website is recognized as being on the cutting edge of technological development in society. The posting of media products and services on the public website bears witness to its digital media profile. For instance, on the analysis of the Nation Media Group website, the media house is perceived (and perceives itself) as having a public-sector profiles. Although the implication of this orientation towards a

larger public through its website is difficult to assess, it presumably frames daily practices and contributes to the identity of employees vis-à-vis their 'significant others' both internally and externally (Mead, 1934).

Through the various features of the website, visitors are able to access a lot of different information.

5.2.1 Public/ Customer/ Client Service

In analytical terms, the structural and dynamic dimension of publicity can be illustrated with the diagram from Wilhem (1999).

Publicity	Structural Dimension	Dynamic Dimension
Level of production	Ownership to control and access to the infrastructure (e.g. physical localities and equipment), and other material resources necessary for production of publicity	Technical expressive and communicative skills required in the production of publicity. Opportunities of publicity, motive to participate
Level of representation	The architecture of discursive space of publicity Diversity of topics represented in and actors given access to the discursive spaces of publicity Diversity of publicity available for public communication	Contextualization of topics, articulation of accessed actors' interests Communicative relationship between accessed actors (one-way and reciprocal, hierarchical, horizontal) Mode of mediation (monologue vs. dialogue)
	Website related addressivity	The implied social actor role

The diagram conveys the structural and dynamic dimension of publicity of closely inter-related levels: production and representation. The whole notion of publicity can be summarized by asking firstly, who has access to the ownership and control of the resources that are necessary for the production of public communication; and how open or closed a process is in terms of technical as well as communicative skills-based access (level of production). Second, what is the architecture of the discursive space of publicity

and how diverse is the range of issues represented in and actors that have access to the space? Moreover, how contextualized – historically and otherwise – are the topics represented in and what are the communicative relationships between the actors with access to the discursive space of publicity (level of representation)? At the level of representation, the dynamic aspect in this study boils down to the mode of mediation for in the discursive space of publicity, it is the intermediary that has power of choice, define and frame those topics to grant access to the actors, to formulate and contextualize what they are saying as well as to organize their relationships. By analysis, the mediating activities of the media website, it is possible to determine how monological or dialogical a form of public communication the website is...

Analysis of the structural and dynamic dimensions both at the level of production and representation will help us; first, gain a clearer picture of how public communication is mediated in the website – including journalist ones. Second, we can grasp the ways in which the website structure enables social agency. For instance, we can ask how interaction is conditioned, framed and organized in the production and discursive practices of the website and in what kind of social actor roles does the website related mediation profit people. Are they approached and addressed as an audience observing social reality from the sidelines, or as a public agent, potentially interested in taking an active part in shaping that reality? These same questions can be answered in articulating e-commerce, with the assumption that the media website has a role in engaging policy makers on legal and social issues surrounding the e-commerce environment, and also

informing corporate business of Kenya's infrastructural capacity to support the development of e-commerce.

Findings in this study reveal that the publics served by the media website takes many descriptions, in the face of interactivity. This notion remains one of the most central concepts, though one of the most notoriously difficult to define (J. F. Jensen, 1999; Kionsis, 2002; McMillan, 2002). In research on computer media in general, and in studies of web communication in particular. The notion also informs accounts by both the internal and external publics regarding the potential commercial as well as broader social implications of the internet.

In this study, to explain the e-commerce potentials of the media website in the light of influence to the significant others, we discuss the interactivities of the website and modeling as an interdisciplinary concept.

At least from the perspective of history of ideas and scientific concepts, before there is interactivity, there was 'interaction'. As indicated by one review of the terminological uses of interactivity, it derives from 'interaction', a concept which generally means exchange, interplay, mutual influence (J. F. Jesen, 1999). For the purposes of organizational and communication research, the ground work of this concept was done with sociology. As a discipline, sociology has sought to theorize who the actions of two or more individuals come to be coordinated, thus enabling community and society. Relating this assertion to this study in modern societies, technologies, for example

communication, have played an ever increasing role in facilitating more complex interaction across time and space, what Giddens (1990) has referred to as time – space distance. Nevertheless, interaction as such remains an elementary of all social life, from the micro to the macro level, and comes across public as well as private social settings.

In the context of this study, an important aspect of the concept of interaction, as developed within sociology and other social sciences, is meaning or interpretation by other respondents. In order to qualify as interaction, an activity must be interpreted in terms of some form of contextual meaning, relevance, or consequence, by participants and/ or by standers.

One classic contribution of the media website on emphasizing the meaningful nature of social interaction was the work of Mead (1934). He referred to the various types of significant others in relation to whom individuals have come to define themselves, their identities, and their competences. The Media has done these through its website.

Beyond primary socialization and face-to-face exchanges, information and communication technologies – in this case the media and media websites – have become an important arena of significant others. According to J. F. Jensen (1999), interactivity has come to refer more broadly to the process by which humans operate a computer in a sequentially structured manner, as covered by their field of human computer interaction (HCI) (Preece, Rogers & Sharp, 2002).

In this study, findings of the notion of interactivity has highlighted the many ways in which the users can modify the form and content of computer messages, and in so doing, accomplish a wide range of social tasks including e-commerce.

From analysis of the findings of the study, the media website offers generally the following services:

- Information – the website is a global system of linked web pages containing information in text, pictures, and audio-visuals.
- Programmes – programmes available on the internet make it possible to access and operate websites.
- Entertainment – the website allows the public review movies and television themes
- Online shopping – the website has links to other organizations, allowing users to view catalogues and registration forms. This is the basis e-commerce
- Discussion groups – through the Internet Relay Chat (IRC) users can interact

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The website offers services which can be used as tools in various ways: as a research tool to learn about new products, markets and customer opinions; as an advertising/ trading tool to aid in selling goods such as news or delivery of information; as a communication to support correspondence with customers, suppliers or staff through electronic mail; and as an entertainment channel by providing television themes.

The study also found that while online customers, internal staff and revenue earners such as advertisers are served by the website, the website attracted various users including

researchers, individuals (for communication and work), and people with ideas and similar interests wanting to share opinions regarding news.

5.2.2 Design of the media website

The media website design is specific in content which are easily identified by the users. Respondents indicated how interactive web applications are with shared resources. The use of Local Area Networks (LAN) which “mediate among multiple distributed actors (in this case the respondents) who are not only users, but also designers, regulators, service providers, in the sense that they contribute to the systems structure and contents” (www.nationmedia.com, June 16, 2006).

Drawn from observation, browsing the media website facilitates various moves of navigation/ surfing. All pages have links which connect one web page to another part of the same web page, one web page to another website, and a page to a file such as a sound clip, video, spread sheet or plain text document.

The hyperlinks are specific – they are underlined or highlighted in blue. This is designed for immediate identification of the site’s purpose, content and/ or graphics. This specificity is an attractor to the site visitor who need not register to access further or more information. Other attractors include representation of hyperlinks by buttons, graphics or pictures.

Observation by the researcher indicates that how potential information is transformed into actual communication and interaction is important to the relevance of designing the

website. Analysis of the home page (the first page or introductory page when a website is accessed), highlights strong, relevant, newsworthy and credible contents meant for diverse public in form of contents. Perhaps more important is how to make these resources accessible, researchable and applicable.

Like most websites, the web address is readily available to display media pages. This is set on design rules of integrity and clarity, for example, www.nationmedia.com for the local web host and the World Wide Web respectively. Wildcards are also applicable in case the visitor may not know the full path, for instance

<http://www.nationmedia.com.net/leisure/recreation>.

Besides the standard of design, graphics, search tools and other interactive features are emphasized as attractors. Following the assumption that the media has a role in promoting information technology training in higher education, the researcher observes that the technical design and/ or elements are desirable in the computer needs resources. Issues are beyond the technologies and social skills available and also include the very condition of technologically mediated communication. The wider implication is a presumably healthy skepticism regarding the concrete value of technological media. Thinking ahead about the future with computers, there is genuine concern about possible job loss as computers take over more tasks. On the other hand, the future cannot be stopped. There has to be someone in control of those machines.

5.3 How challenges facing the growth of e-commerce can be addressed

In the previous chapter, external publics explained challenges facing the growth of e-commerce in Kenya. The respondents recognize that the media has a role in addressing these challenges.

First, the media should include ICT in Corporate Social Responsibility programmes. As mentioned earlier, credit and debit card companies need to lobby the government to put in place infrastructure to support electronic transactions. The media can provide air time or space in the print media as a means to reaching the policy makers. The media can also lobby in collaboration with corporate businesses. In the long run, this will encourage other market entrants into the credit and debit card business.

As an incentive to advertisers, the media can offer e-commerce solutions to those without the infrastructure. The Nation Media Group is offering this service although it is not well publicized. The media house needs to create awareness of this service.

Another way in which the media can support the growth of e-commerce is by carrying out a planned and deliberate effort to carry articles and features that educate corporate organizations on e-commerce. The media can do this in collaboration with IT service providers. Currently, TESPOK through one of its members carries articles although this is far and in-between.

In order to address the challenges in offering state-of-the art IT courses in institutions of higher learning, the government should make a deliberate effort to invest in equipment

and training of lecturers. One way of doing this is by offering incentives and tax rebates to those importing ICT equipment to supply to these institutions. The government has made the right decision on zero-rating tax on computers imported. That way, businesses will have access to ICTs. Institutions of higher learning can also seek for support from IT service providers through their corporate social responsibility programmes. Corporate organizations, too can offer internships to IT students to expose them to the reality of the work environment.

All actors involved in e-commerce including internet service providers (through their association TESPOK), the Kenya Network Information Centre (KENIC) credit card companies, corporate businesses and regulatory bodies, should come together to create public awareness on the advantages of adopting e-commerce. The media can play a role in channeling the message to the audience. Public awareness should also cover requirements for engaging in e-commerce such as licencing, internet connections, domain registration and payment systems.

The Kenya Education Network (KENET) should create more awareness on the importance of adopting educational institutions fully adopting and updating ICTs in order to improve students compute skills, and serve as an example by offering high quality electronic services. KENET can collaborate with The Association of Internet Service Providers (TESPOK) to lobby for educational institutions to offer IT courses that are relevant for today's market.

One of the challenges mentioned in the previous chapter, was the high costs of internet connections. The main way of bringing down internet costs is to encourage local content through local domain hosting. The Kenya Network Information Centre (KENIC) carried out a campaign in 2004 to promote the registration of local domains (.ke). These campaigns should be carried out more frequently and in collaboration with internet service providers.

Corporate businesses and educational institutions should be educated on the advantages of adopting new technologies as they offer improved services. In the long run, service delivery improves, and revenues improve. For educational institutions, adopting new technologies means producing graduates with marketable IT skills making it easy for them to adapt to the work environment.

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire to Training Institutions

To: (Name)
Organization

Date:
Subject: **Research Questionnaire**

Dear _____.

I am a post-graduate student at the School of Journalism, University of Nairobi. I am carrying out a study on *Media Influence on the Adoption of e-commerce: The Kenyan Scenario*.

The objective of this study is to identify and examine the role of the media in influencing the adoption of e-commerce among corporate organizations in Kenya. The main focus of this questionnaire will be to establish the level of media engagement in promoting information technology training in higher education. Kindly fill in the questionnaire and return it by (date).

Yours faithfully

Susan A. Onyango
K/50/P/7521/03

Name of respondent (optional): _____

Position: _____

Institution: _____

Postal Address: _____

Date: _____

1. What Information Technology courses does your institution offer?

2. What levels of courses are offered? (You may tick more than one)

- a. Certificate _____
- b. Diploma _____
- c. Undergraduate _____
- d. Post Graduate _____
- e. Other (please specify) _____

3. How often is the curriculum revised?

- a. Annually _____
- b. Bi-annually _____
- c. Every 5 years _____
- d. Other (please specify) _____

4. a. Does your institution offer any courses examined by any international bodies?

- (i) Yes _____
- (ii) No _____

b. If yes, please list

5. How do you target course participants?
- a. Direct mailing to organizations _____
 - b. Advertisements through media _____
 - c. Other (specify) _____

6. Who are the course participants
- a. IT specialists _____
 - b. Management staff _____
 - c. School leavers _____
 - d. Other (please specify) _____

7. a. Does your institution offer continuing education courses in Information Technology to corporate executives?
- (i) Yes _____
 - (ii) No _____

b. Please explain

8. a. Does your institution have arrangements with corporate organizations to facilitate industrial attachment programmes for students?
- (i) Yes _____
 - (ii) No _____

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b. Please explain your answer

9. a. Is there a demand for IT related courses?
- (i) Yes _____
 - (ii) No _____

b. Please explain.

10. (a) Does the institution have any contacts with the media?

(i) Yes _____

(ii) No _____

b. Please explain.

11. a. Does the institution have any contact with IT policy makers?

(i) Yes _____

(ii) No _____

b. Explain

12. How does your institution respond to the rapidly changing IT environment?

13. What challenges do you face in trying to respond to these changes mentioned above?

14. How does your institution respond to these challenges?



General

a. Are there other issues relating to e-commerce that you think this questionnaire has not addressed

(i) Yes _____

(ii) No _____

b. If yes, which ones

Appendix 2: Questionnaire to Internet Service Providers

To:

Date:

Subject: **Research Questionnaire**

Dear,

I am a post-graduate student at the School of Journalism, University of Nairobi. I am carrying out a study on *Media Influence on the Adoption of e-commerce: The Kenyan Scenario*

The objective of this study is to identify and examine the role of the media in influencing the adoption of e-commerce among corporate organizations in Kenya. The main focus of this questionnaire is to investigate the role of internet service providers in promoting the growth of e-commerce in Kenya. Kindly fill in the questionnaire and return it by email.

Yours faithfully

Susan A. Onyango
K/50/P/7521/03

Name of respondent (Optional): _____

Position: _____

Corporate Organization: _____

Postal Address: _____

Date: _____

1. What are the minimum requirements for a small business to engage in e-commerce?

2. What is your organization doing to sell the concept of e-commerce to businesses in Kenya?

3. What is the investment your organization has made in IT in terms of equipment and monetary value to provide services to businesses that engage in e-commerce?

4.a. Has this investment translated into increased sales and enhanced revenue collection for these organizations?

- (i) Yes _____
- (ii) No _____

b. Please explain your answer.

5. How has your organization responded to the rapidly changing global IT environment?

6. What challenges has your organization face while responding to the rapidly changing global IT environment?

7. How can these challenges be addressed?

8. What levels of qualifications do IT staff within your organization have?

- a. Certificate _____
- b. Diploma _____
- c. Graduate _____
- d. Postgraduate _____
- e. Other (specify) _____

9. a. Does your organization offer training programmes to upgrade skills of these staff?

- (i) Yes _____
- (ii) No _____

b. Please explain your answer

10. a. How is your organization informed of policy issues within the IT environment in Kenya?

- (i) Direct briefings from policy makers
- (ii) Through the media
- (iii) Workshops and symposiums
- (iv) Other (specify) _____

b. Briefly explain your answer in 9a. above

11. a. Do the media have direct contact with your organization with regard to IT matters?

- (i) Yes _____
- (ii) No _____

b. Please explain your answer

12. Please suggest ways in which the media and internet service providers can work together for enhancement of the use of e-commerce

General

a. Are there other issues relating to e-commerce that you think this questionnaire has not addressed

(i) Yes _____

(ii) No _____

b. If yes, which ones

Appendix 3: Questionnaire to Corporate Organizations

To:

Date:

Subject: **Research Questionnaire**

Dear,

I am a post-graduate student at the School of Journalism, University of Nairobi. I am carrying out a study on *Media Influence on the Adoption of e-commerce: The Kenyan Scenario*.

The objective of this study is to identify and examine the role of the media in influencing the adoption of e-commerce among corporate organizations in Kenya. The main focus of this questionnaire will be to establish the level of media engagement in disseminating e-commerce related information to corporate organizations. Kindly fill in the questionnaire and return it by email.

Yours faithfully

Susan A. Onyango
K/50/P/7521/03

Name of respondent (Optional): _____

Position: _____

Corporate Organization: _____

Postal Address: _____

Date: _____

1. What IT applications does your organization apply in day to day business transactions?

2. What is the investment your organization has made in IT in terms of equipment and monetary value?

3. a. Has this investment translated into increased sales and enhanced revenue collection?

(i) Yes _____

(ii) No _____

b. Please explain your answer.

4. How has your organization responded to the rapidly changing global IT environment?

5. What challenges has your organization faced while responding to the rapidly changing global IT environment?

6. How can these challenges be addressed?

7. What levels of qualifications do IT staff within your organization have?

- f. Certificate _____
- g. Diploma _____
- h. Graduate _____
- i. Postgraduate _____
- j. Other (specify) _____

8. a. Does your organization offer training programmes to upgrade skills of these staff?

- (i) Yes _____
- (ii) No _____

b. Please explain your answer

9. a. How is your organization informed of policy issues within the IT environment in Kenya?

- (i) Direct briefings from policy makers
- (ii) Through the media
- (iii) Workshops and symposiums
- (iv) Other (specify) _____

(b) Briefly explain your answer in 9a. above

10. a. Do the media have direct contact with your organization with regard to IT matters?

- (i) Yes _____
- (ii) No _____

b. Please explain your answer

11. Please suggest ways in which the media and corporate organizations can work together for enhancement of the use of e-commerce

General

a. Are there other issues relating to e-commerce that you think this questionnaire has not addressed

- (i) Yes _____
- (ii) No _____

b. If yes, which ones

Appendix 4: Questionnaire to Policy Making Institutions

To: (Name)
Organization

Date:
Subject: **Research Questionnaire**

Dear _____,

I am a post-graduate student at the School of Journalism, University of Nairobi. I am carrying out a study on *Media Influence on the Adoption of E-Commerce: the Kenyan Scenario*.

The objective of this study is to identify and examine the role of the media in influencing the adoption of e-commerce among corporate organizations in Kenya. The main focus of this questionnaire is to establish the level of media engagement in legal, policy and social issues that influence the adoption of e-commerce in Kenya. Kindly fill in the questionnaire and return it by (date).

Yours faithfully

Susan A. Onyango
K/50/P/7521/03

Name of respondent (optional): _____

Position: _____

Institution: _____

Postal Address: _____

Date: _____

1. How does your institution influence the information technology environment in Kenya?

2. How are policies formulated by your institution implemented and enforced?

3. What challenges does your institution face with regard to responding to the rapidly changing global IT environment?

4. How can this be addressed?

5. What is your institution doing to with regard to improving the information technology environment in Kenya?

6. a. Does your institution collaborate with training institutions to design courses in IT?

(i) Yes _____

(ii) No _____

b. Please explain

7. a. How does your institution communicate changes in policy issues to corporate organizations?(You may tick more than one)

(i) Direct briefings _____

(ii) Through the media _____

(iii) Workshops and symposiums _____

(iv) Other (specify) _____

b. Please explain

8. a. Do the media have direct contact with your institution?

(i) Yes _____

(ii) No _____

b. Please explain.

9. How can policy makers and the media work together to educate corporate organizations on the benefits of IT related subjects such as electronic commerce?

10. What is the future of electronic commerce in Kenya?

General

a. Are there other issues relating to e-commerce that you think this questionnaire has not addressed

(i) Yes _____

(ii) No _____

b. If yes, which ones

Appendix 5: Interview guide

1. Can you describe any reasons why the media website was established?
2. How useful is the media website in providing e-commerce information to corporate organizations?
3. Who is the target audience of the media website, and how is the media website useful to them?
4. Briefly comment on the design of the media website in regard to content, products, e-commerce features, interactivity, accessibility and ease of browsing.