EUN JIN LEE Chung-Ang University

BYUNG SOOK HONG* Chung-Ang University

Perceived Pressures and Organizational Readiness on the Continuous Internet Adaptation Intention in Fashion Companies[†]

This study analyzes how the perceived pressures and organizational readiness of fashion companies (that utilize the internet as a marketing or commercial transaction tool) influence the continuous internet adaptation intention. It ascertains the differences between the companies that have introduced the internet commercial transaction and companies that have not. The survey was conducted among the employees of fashion companies from January 15th to February 20th in 2009. A total of 314 respondents were submitted for analysis using diverse methods that include frequency analysis, factor analysis, reliability analysis, t-test, and multiple regression analysis. The results show that the perceived internal and external pressures, the support of the chief executive officer and capacity of the organization influence the continuous internet adaptation intention of fashion companies. There are differences in the perceived internal and external pressures, support of the chief executive officer, capacity of the organization, and continuous internet adaptation intention between companies that introduced a internet commercial transaction system and those that have not.

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MOE-KRF Research Professor, Department of Clothing & Textiles, Chung-Ang University, Seoul, Korea (nefa12@hanmail.net)

*Professor, Department of Clothing & Textiles, Chung-Ang University, Seoul, Korea

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Internet commercial transactions have the business characteristics of low cost, internationalism, interaction, facility of entry, low price, convenience, abundant product information, and personalized services. This is a business form that fits the characteristics of the fashion industry to respond to fast trend alterations, individualization, and diversification of customer desires. Difficulties were expected in the introduction considering the characteristics of fashion products of having sizes, quality, and colors to be checked before purchase. Internet transactions are increasing due to the possibility of exchange, refunds, after service, the information provided for less risk in purchasing goods, and low cost by cooperative purchases (Lee, 2006).

Concerns and actual investments of the fashion companies about internet businesses through the building of independent web sites or running shopping malls specializing in fashion products, or cooperating with internet companies are increasing. However, most of the fashion companies make an entry to the internet without establishing a business model through a sufficient understanding of the internet business and have no viable effects. The problem of whether the internet should be continuously adopted as a marketing tool for commercial transactions has become an important

strategic choice.

The usage of the internet by fashion companies is regarded as an innovation dimension due to changes to the current business, establishing of a variety of advertisements, and public relations (PR) strategies. Innovation is the action of an individual or an organization that introduces or adopts new technologies, ideas, and manufacturing techniques. According to Rogers (1995), the internal and external characteristics of an organization effect the introduction and adaptation of innovation. In the view of technological innovation, Grover and Goslar (1993) asserted that the external environment and organizational factors affect the process of the organization introducing and executing innovation. These studies show the theory of innovation adaptation is being applied to related studies on the internet as an innovation of information technology.

The Studies of the Internet (Ahn & Kim, 1999; Ji & Yim, 2004; Ketting & Hackbarth, 1997; Kim, Lee, & Choi, 2003; Teo, Lim, & Lai, 1999; Yu, 2007) discusses the environmental factors, organizational factors and technological factors as important variables for the introduction and adaptation of companies to the internet. It and focused on clarifying influential factors on the introduction and adaptation to the internet among those variables. Environmental factors such as the competitive status, internal pressures and the organizational readiness such as chief executive officer (CEO) support, capacity of the organization, and future market orientation are the decisive factors of internet adaptation. However, the studies that surveyed companies of a particular industry and are difficult to apply to fashion companies.

This study analyzes the perceived pressures and organizational readiness of fashion companies that utilize the internet as a marketing or commercial transaction tool in view of innovation adaptation. It then analyzes the effect these factors have on the intention of continuously adapting to the internet. Fashion companies were classified into two groups that have introduced the internet commercial transaction system and those that have not, according to the level of internet usage to provide help to the establishment of internet business strategies for

fashion companies by analyzing the differences in the perceived pressures, organizational readiness, and continuous internet adaptation intention.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The Theory of Internet Innovation Adaptation

The theory of innovation adaptation was studied on the individual or organizational dimension. Rogers (1995) explained that individuals go through five steps of recognition, interests, assessment, usage, and acceptance or rejection for an adaptation decision. Brancheau and Wetherbe (1990) sorted the process of individual adaptation of innovation into knowledge, persuasion, decision and practice. Premkumar, Ramamurthy, and Nilakanta (1994) indicated that even when an innovation is adopted (due to organizational or environmental pressures) the diffusion of the innovation might not be achieved due to insufficient CEO support and other factors such as expenses.

Recent studies on internet innovation are based on the theory of innovation adaptation studied in the individual and organizational dimension. Tornatzky and Fleischer (1990) discussed the environmental characteristics and organizational characteristics as factors that promote or obstruct the technological innovation of a company. Grover and Goslar (1993) asserted that environmental and organizational factors such as the competitive status or customer influence affect the innovation processes of companies. Previous studies (Cooper & Zmud, 1990; Iacovau, Benbasat, & Dexter, 1995; Ji & Yim, 2004; Lee, 2002; Lee, 2008) verified that the perceived internal and external pressures, organizational readiness (such as CEO support), organizational capacity, and future market orientation are decisive factors for internet adaptation.

On the perceived pressures, Chandy and Tellis (1998) asserted that if an influential supporter of a product exists in a company, the product can be successfully innovated, while Ji and Yim (2004) indicated that the more employees supported (through the internet in the company) the higher the introducing intention of the internet shopping malls. Iacovau *et al.* (1995) explained that not only the

inner pressures of directors and employees but also the pressures of related companies and competing companies were factors promoting the adaptation of technological innovation by companies. While Porter (2001) asserted that it is necessary to make positioning strategies distinguished from other competing companies in order to attain a competitive position through the web.

Grover and Goslar (1993) indicated that the more strength an substructure of information technology has in a company the more it adopts the information system among organizations. Ramamurthy and Premkumar (1995) specified a substructure of information systems as the holding level of hardware or software, related specialized technologies, skills, the holding level of human resources for the development of computer systems, and the holding level of networks. Johne (1996) asserted that companies accepting the growth of the future markets rather than attainment of short-term profits and returns tend to adopt innovation promptly.

Ji (2003) asserted that a belief and future vision of the chief executive officer of a firm (as well as an innovative inclination to introduce new management techniques or technological information) have an effect on the adaptation of commercial internet transactions companies. However, in the case lacking the CEO support the innovation of technology cannot be carried out successfully. Lee (2008) indicated that the fashion companies with sufficient capacity and future visions tend to have a higher intention of introducing the internet.

The Relationship between Perceived Pressures or Organizational Readiness and the Adaptation Intention of the Internet

The studies related internet that the perceived pressures as well as organizational readiness analyzed the effect on the intention of adapting to the internet of the companies. Ketting and Hackbarth (1997) asserted that the internal or external pressures and the organizational readiness have an effect on adopting the technology of electronic commercial transactions. Yu (2007) conducted research on the effective factors on the

intention of adopting the B2B e-marketplace by targeting 94 companies that have adopted the B2B e-marketplace and 108 that have not.

In the research, the characteristics of the companies, competitive environment and the CEO support had an effect on the adaptation of the B2B e-marketplace by all companies. In addition, the competitive business environment had an effect on the adaptation by companies that have not yet participated, while the competitive environment and CEO support had an effect on the intention of continuous adaptation by those that have already participated. This clarified the deciding factors of B2B e-marketplace adaptation and at the same time verified the difference in the deciding factors between the participating companies of the B2B e-marketplace and the companies that have not participated.

Ahn and Kim (1999) conducted a survey of small and medium sized companies in the Seoul area with companies utilizing internet commercial transactions and 44 that did not. The study examined the effects of the external environment (market uncertainty and competing relations with other companies), organizational readiness (perceived benefits and CEO support) and technical preparations (base structure of the information system) on the introduction of the electronic commercial transaction system. This was done to verify the difference in the external environment and organizational readiness between the groups. Seo, Yoo, and Lee (2001) mentioned that the environmental characteristics (level of competition and environmental uncertainty) and the organizational characteristics (CEO support and base structure of the information system) of manufacturers and service companies had influenced the participation in the B2B electronic commercial transaction.

Kim, Lee, and Choi (2003) indicated that the environmental factors such as the number of competitors and the environmental uncertainty, the existing assets of the company, expected advantages and convertible expense had an effect on the intention of companies participating in the e-marketplace. Lee (2002) conducted a survey of enterprises that dealt with publications and the

distribution in the Seoul capital area (and other major cities) that found that among external factors (market uncertainty, pressures from competing enterprises to introduce electronic commercial transaction), internal factors (size of enterprise, base structure of the information system), CEO characteristics, (innovativeness, computational knowledge) that the size of the enterprise and innovativeness of the CEO affect the adaptation intention in the electronic commercial transactions of the companies.

Ji and Yim (2004) conducted a survey of employees of manufacturers and service industries that also indicated that the perceived pressure factors (internal pressures and external pressures) and the organizational readiness (CEO support, organizational capacity, and future market orientation) were effective factors over the adaptation intention of the B2C internet shopping malls. Lee (2008) mentioned that the internal and external pressures in the CEO support, capacity of the organization, and future market orientation of the fashion companies were deciding factors of the introduction intention of the internet.

Based on these previous studies, this study examined the effect of the perceived pressures and organizational readiness on the continuous internet adaptation intention in fashion companies.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Questions

This study analyzed the perceived pressures, organizational readiness and continuous internet adaptation intentions of fashion companies that utilize the internet as a marketing or a commercial transaction tool. The research questions were as follows. First, find out the composite factors of the perceived pressures and organizational readiness in fashion companies. Second, analyze the effect of the perceived pressures and organizational readiness on continuous internet adaptation intention in fashion companies. Lastly, examine the differences in the perceived pressures, organizational readiness and continuous adaptation intention of the internet between the fashion companies that have introduced

the internet commercial transaction system and those that have not.

Measurements

The questions on the level of internet usage were based on the study by Ji (2003), and measured two items on the introduction of the internet and the usage of the electronic commercial transactions by the nominal scale. On the perceived pressures, the nine questions related to the internal pressures and external pressures were measured by the 5-point Likert scale in reference to the studies of Chandy and Tellis (1998), Toe et al. (1999), Seo et al. (2001), Ji (2003) and Lee (2008). The organizational readiness was based on the studies of Ramamurthy and Premkumar (1995), Kettinger and Hackbarth (1997), Lee (2002), Ji and Yim (2004), and was measured by the 5-point Likert scales on 13 questions on CEO support, organizational capacity, and future market orientation.

The continuous internet adaptation intention was based on the studies of Seo and Lee (2000), Lee (2002), and was measured by the 5-point Likert scales of five questions related to the continuous internet adaptation and level of financial and human capital investments. Regarding the demographic characteristics, the nominal scale measured six questions including gender, age, marital state, academic background, career record, and occupation.

Data Collection and Analysis

This study conducted a survey of employees of the fashion companies located in the Seoul capital area that are utilizing the internet as a marketing and commercial transaction tool, among the fashion companies manufacturing and selling casual wear (women's wear, men's wear, and sportswear). The respondents were limited to five per company in a survey conducted from January 15th to February 20th 2009 through individual visits and e-mail contacts. The management, merchandise, design, planning, and sales divisions responded directly to questions in the case of companies that did not have the internet divisions. The statistical analysis methods were

frequency analysis, factor analysis, reliability analysis, t-test, and multiple regression analysis based on 314 respondents used in the data analysis.

The fashion companies that the respondents were employees of consisted of companies that deal with casual wear (39.2%), men's wear (21.2%), women's wear (20.4%), and sportswear (19.2%). Among these, 62.1% were introduced in internet commercial transaction, while the divisions in charge were online divisions (21.2%), marketing divisions (20.8%), sales divisions (19.8%), designing divisions (19.6%), and planning divisions (18.6%). The number of women respondents (63.1%) were more than men (36.9%), while 98.1% were in their twenties (45.2%) and thirties (52.9%), and the unmarried (63.1%) group was larger than the married group (36.9%). In addition, 94.8% had academic degrees over college and 86.2% had career records for working experience over three years.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Composite Factors of Perceived Pressures, Organizational Readiness and the Continuous Internet adaptation Intention

Perceived Pressures As a result of analyzing the factors of 9 questions regarding the perceived pressures of fashion companies, the two factors with an Eigen value over 1.0 were extracted as shown in Table 1. Factor 1 was named "external pressures" in relation to the increase in the number of related

companies and competitors that adopted and utilized the internet, the increase in the number of the customers who want to utilize the internet, and the active operation of the internet by competing companies. Factor 2 named "internal pressures" considered the level of the wishes of the employees to utilize the internet and the assertion of importance, in addition to the perception level of the necessity of the internet by the inner executive members.

The total variate these two factors was 75.102%, while the "external pressure" showed a higher degree of verification than the "internal pressures", with no excluded questions in the process of factor analysis due to an over 0.5 result in the factor value. Moreover the reliability analysis resulted with the cronbach's α coefficient of over 0.8 and showed a high reliability in the questions.

Organizational Readiness As a result of analyzing the factors of 13 items on the organizational readiness of fashion companies, three factors with an Eigen value of over 1.0 have been extracted in Table 2.

Factor 1 was named "CEO Support" relating to the level of taking risk and introducing new management techniques and technical information of the CEO for the utilization of the internet. Factor 2 was named "Organizational Capacity" relating the level of securement specialized human resources, information system, technology, and expertise for the utilization of the internet in fashion companies. Factor 3 was named "Future Market Orientation"

Table 1. Results of Factor Analysis and Reliability Analysis of Perceived Pressures

Factors	Measured Items	Factor Loadings	Eigen Value	Cumulated % of Var.	Cronbach's α
External Pressures	Increase in the number of major transactions by companies that adopt and utilize the internet	.855		50.050	.894
	Increase in the number of competing companies that adopt and utilize the internet	.854	5 200		
	Increase in the number of customers who wish to utilize the internet	.786	5.398 5	59.979	
	Level of active operation by competing companies	.768			
	Level of strong requests from the major transaction companies to adopt the internet	panies to adopt .668			
Internal Pressures	Level of the desire by employees to utilize the internet	.895			
	Level of the inner executive members perceiving the necessity of the	.846			
	internet The level of which the employees assert the importance of the internet The level of which the inner executive members strongly assert the utilization of the internet	.829 .820	1.361	75.102	.914

Factors	Measured Items	Factor Loadings	Eigen Value	Cumulated % of Var.	Cronbach's α
	Level of taking risks of the CEO for the adaptation to the internet The willingness of the CEO to introduce new managerial techniques for the adaptation to the internet	.854 .839		48.544	.911
CEO Support	The level of entire support by the CEO on the utilization of the internet	.834	5.825		
	Firm belief and visions of the CEO regarding the utilization of the internet	.817			
	The willingness of the CEO to introduce the new technological information needed for the utilization of the internet	.799			
	Level of securement of specialized human resources for the utilization of the internet	.842		65.981	.867
Organizational	The level of holding sufficient financial capital for the utilization of the internet	.840	2 002		
Capacity	The level of securement of specialized technology and skills for the utilization of the internet	.760	2.092		
	The level of securement of information system (hardware and software) for the utilization of the internet	.706			
Future Market Orientation	The level of emphasis on the future visions than the present The level of future market orientation other than that depending on	.857 .842	1.101 75.		.848
	past success. The level of future market orientation relative to competing companies	.655		75.156	

Table 2. Results of Factor Analysis and Reliability Analysis of Organization Readiness

relating the level of emphasis on future visions that were future oriented rather than focused on achievements and future market orientation relative to other competing companies.

The total variate the three factors was 75.156%, and the factor that showed highest degree of verification was "CEO Support" while one questions relating to the future market orientation that had a factor value of less than 0.5 was excluded. As a result of the reliability analysis, the cronbach's α coefficient resulted in over 0.8 and verified a high reliability of the questions.

Continuous Internet adaptation Intention One factor with an Eigen value of over 1.0 was extracted in Table 3 as a result of analyzing the factors of the 5 questions on the continuous adaptation intention. This consisted of the intention to financially invest in human capital in order to adopt the internet continuously, the intention of building the technological system, the intention of introducing, and the intention to utilize the internet continuously. The total variate that explained this factor was 77.808%, with no excluded items during the analysis due to a factor value over 0.5 that showed a high reliability of the questions with the cronbach's α coefficient of 0.927.

The Effect of the Perceived Pressures and Organizational Readiness of Fashion Companies on Continuous Internet adaptation Intention

The respective multiple regression analysis was conducted to analyze the effect of the perceived pressures and organizational readiness of fashion companies on continuous internet adaptation intention. The continuous internet adaptation intention was used as a dependent variable; the perceived internal/external pressures and organizational readiness were used as independent variables as shown in Table 4.

Both had an effect on the intention of continuously adapting to the internet as a result of the multiple regression analysis between perceived pressures and continuous internet adaptation intention, the external pressures (β =0.416, t=9.444, p<.001) and the internal pressures (β =0.474, t=10.760, p<.001). The internal pressures had a stronger effect and 39.4% of the concept was explained. The greater the numbers of competing companies that utilize the internet (and the larger number of customers that use the internet channel) the higher the intention to continuously adopt the internet in fashion companies. This result was similar to studies of Seo (2001) and Ji (2003) that the internal and external pressures on companies have

Factor Cumulated % Eigen Cronbach's α Factor Measured Items Loadings Value of Var .929 The intention of financially investing for continuously adapting to the internet The intention of investing in human capital for continuously .918 adapting to the internet Continuous Internet The intention of building the technological system for continu-.881 3.890 77.808 .927 Adaptation Intention ously adapting to the internet The intention of introducing and maintaining the internet busi-.869 ness transaction system within one year The intention of continuously utilizing and maintaining the 809 usage of the internet

Table 3. Results of Factor Analysis and Reliability Analysis of Continuous Internet Adaptation Intention

Table 4. Results of the Multiple Analyses between the Perceived Pressures or Organization Readiness and Continuous Internet Adaptation

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	β	t	F	R^{2}
Continuous Internet Adaptation Intention	External pressures Internal pressures	0.416 0.474	9.444*** 10.760***	102.481***	0.394
Continuous Internet Adaptation Intention	CEO Support Organizational capacity Future market orientation	0.687 0.152 0.070	17.104*** 3.791*** 1.743	103.324***	0.495

^{****} p < .001

an effect on the intention of adapting to the internet.

Regarding the effect relationship between the organizational readiness of fashion companies and intentions of continuously adapting to the internet, the CEO support (β = 0.687, t = 17.104, p < .001), and organizational capacity (β = 0.152, t = 3.791, p < .001) had an effect on the continuous internet adaptation intention and 49.5% of the concept was explained; the CEO support showed the highest power of influence. The intention of the fashion companies to continuously adapt to internet increases in proportion to the intention of adopting new management techniques, technological information, and entire support in utilizing the internet by the CEO. The results were similar to studies by Ji and Yim (2004) and Lee (2008) in that the CEO support and the capacity of the organization influence the intention of adapting to the internet in companies.

The perceived internal and external pressures, CEO support, and capacity of the organization were decisive factors of the continuous internet adaptation intention of the fashion companies. The results were similar to studies in other industries. The internal and external pressures due to the adaptation to the internet were an environmental characteristic not

limited to certain industries, but were manifest in most industries. In order for fashion companies to adopt the internet continuously, the organization should be prepare the organizational capacity regarding human capital or technology along with the CEO support.

The Difference in the Perceived Pressures,
Organizational Readiness and Continuous Internet
Adaptation Intention According to Introduction or
Non-introduction of Internet Commercial
Transaction System by Fashion Companies

Fashion companies were classified into those that have adopted the internet commercial transaction system and those that have not, to analyze the differences in the perceived pressures for a t-test, organizational readiness, and continuous internet adaptation intention according to introduction or non-introduction of internet commercial transaction system. Among the groups, the fashion companies that did not adopt the internet commercial transaction system included companies that did not utilize the internet as a commercial transaction tool or utilize it

Table 5. Differences of the Perceived Pressures, Organization Readiness and Continuous Internet adaptation according to the Introduction or Non-introduction of Internet Commercial Transaction

(N = 314)

Classification		Introduction (n = 195)		Non-introduction (n = 119)		t
		\overline{M}	SD	M	SD	=
Perceived Pressures	External pressures Internal pressures	3.39 3.18	0.65 0.74	3.09 2.99	0.83 0.87	3.579*** 2.023*
Organizational Readiness	CEO Support Organizational capacity Future market orientation	3.19 3.33 3.62	0.70 0.73 0.67	2.94 3.15 3.71	0.83 0.73 0.72	2.889** 2.076* -1.144
Continuous Internet Adaptation Intention		3.60	0.73	2.89	0.84	7.910***

p < .05, p < .01, p < .001

as an advertising and marketing tool.

Table 5 showed there were differences in the perceived external pressures (t = 3.579, p < .001), internal pressures (t = 2.023, p < .05), CEO support (t = 2.889, p < .01), organizational capacity (t = 2.076, p < .01)p < .05) and continuous internet adaptation intention (t = 7.910, p < .001) in accordance with the introduction or non-introduction of the internet commercial transaction system. The fashion companies that have introduced the internet commercial transaction system perceived the internal and external pressures regarding the utilization of the internet. CEO support of the utilization of the internet in the perception of the attainment of specialized human resources in financial capital, technology, and skills development for the utilization of the internet created higher intentions of continuously adapting to the internet.

This result was similar to that of the study of Yu (2007) that verified a difference in the competitive environment and CEO support of the between the group of companies that have utilized the B2B e-marketplace and the group that has not. The difference in the continuous internet adaptation intentions were not analyzed in the study of Yu (2007). This study shows that the fashion companies that have adopted the internet commercial transaction system have a higher intention of continuously adapting to the internet, compared with the companies that have not. These results provide implications to the adaptation to the internet in fashion companies.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This study analyzed the effect of the perceived pressures and organizational readiness of fashion companies utilizing the internet as a marketing and commercial transaction tool on the continuous internet adaptation intention, and examined the differences in the perceived pressures, organizational readiness, and continuous adaptation intention of the internet in accordance with the introduction or non-introduction of the internet commercial transaction system.

The results were as follows. First, the perceived pressures were classified into internal pressures and external pressures, while the organizational readiness was classified into the CEO support, organizational capacity, and future market orientation. Second, the perceived internal and external pressures, CEO support, and organizational capacity had an effect on the continuous internet adaptation intention of fashion companies. The future market orientation analyzed was not an effective factor of the continuous adaptation to the internet. Third, differences were found in the perceived internal and external pressures, CEO support, organizational capacity, and the continuous internet adaptation intention between the companies that have introduced the internet commercial transaction system and the companies that have not.

This study proved composite factors of the perceived pressures and organizational readiness for the continuous internet adaptation of fashion companies while previous research referenced the adaptation of technological innovations in internet fields. The organizational readiness was classified into CEO support, organizational capacity, and future market orientation that showed a scale that can be applied to future studies related to the internet. Second, the increase in the number of major transaction companies as well as competing companies (and the increase in the number of customers as internet users) were considered effective determinate factors of the continuous internet adaptation intention in fashion companies. Fashion companies may establish business strategies utilizing the internal and external environmental factors that changed according to the adaptation to the internet. For example, fashion companies can make use of the internet as a space for communication with customers, or establish a sales strategy utilizing the internet shopping malls of main related companies such as department stores and off-price stores. Third, clarified was that CEO support and the capacity of the organization are effective factors of continuous internet adaptation intention. Especially, the level of which the CEO gives support appeared significant. The CEO needs to provide support and have a firm belief as well as future visions on the utilization of the internet in order for fashion companies to introduce the internet and maintain operations. Strengthening the technological, financial and human resource capacities for the operation of the internet utilization will also allow companies to utilize the internet. Fourth, the reason of the intention of adapting to the internet was greater in the case of fashion companies that have introduced the internet commercial transaction system. This shows a greater perception of the internal as well as external pressures to utilize the internet along with sufficient organizational capacity. The companies that have not yet introduced the internet commercial transaction system must examine whether the capacity is sufficient to utilize the internet as a tool for business transactions in order to prepare for market changes.

This study verifies the perceived pressures and the organizational readiness that affect the continuous internet adaptation intention of fashion companies since there may exist other effective factors other than the verified ones. This study has limitations due to a survey conducted without classifying the main products of the fashion companies. Further comparative research studies can produce further results through a classification of fashion companies by main products.

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