

Special Session 6.7 Services Innovation in Multiple Contexts - Part II

Session Chair:

Shashi Matta, Ohio State University

A Spatial Temporal Model of Online Services

Tuck Siong Chung, University of Maryland

P.K. Kannan, University of Maryland

The Role of Technology Readiness in Technology Acceptance: A Three-year Study of Internet Adoption and Usage

Shin Lam, Nanyang Technological University

A. Parasuraman, University of Miami

Jeongwen Chaing, Cheung Kong Graduate School of Business

Do Service Employee Labels Communicate Value? Marketing Implications of Innovative Employment Practices in Service Firms

Valerie Folkes, University of Southern California

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Session Summary Writer:

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Service innovations in modern business can arise from a number of different functional areas, from advances in technology to improvements involving employment practices. As such, this diverse special session included presentations on both technology and employment innovations and their effects on the services industry, answering a number of research questions in the process.

First, does geography influence adoption and usage of online services? Researchers from the University of Maryland state that a number of factors including demographics, technology readiness, customer characteristics and the context of internet usage all play a role, but the spatial impact of geography has been understudied in the past. These researchers aim to remedy this situation by chronicling the adoption of online services over time using a spatial-temporal model, which will partial out the effects of the aforementioned variables to determine geography's significance and project adoption rates by geographic area.

Next, the discussion flowed to the role of technology readiness in technology acceptance, as researchers from Nanyang Technological University, the University of Miami and the Cheung Kong Graduate School of Business asked, "What are the key drivers of technology acceptance?" These researchers studied four dimensions of technology readiness, including the personality traits of optimism, innovativeness, discomfort of use and insecurity and their effect on internet adoption and usage. In sum, this study uncovered that people's traits of optimism, innovativeness, and insecurity with technology have a significant influence on their adoption and use of specific

technologies, and that technology companies should design promotional messages around these traits to encourage and sustain use of new technologies.

The third services innovation presentation investigated consumer perceptions regarding offshoring of customer service support from the United States to foreign shores. Consumer behavior experimentalists from the University of Southern California and The Ohio State University conducted a study in which customer service expectations and performance were evaluated based on an audio recording of a customer service transaction and being told whether or not that employee was located in a company headquarters or a franchise location. Interestingly, even though all customer service voices had American accents and all service interactions were identical, study results indicated that people expect a lower level of service from offshore employees, and penalize the service firms who employ them when customer service quality is deemed low.