

E-Solution for the Newspaper Industry in Sri Lanka: A Feasibility Analysis through Case Studies

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Introduction

E-commerce can be defined as buying and selling of products with financial transaction over electronic systems such as the internet and other computer networks (Schneider, 2007). It is one of the rapid development mechanisms in the Sri Lankan economy. On the other hand a newspaper is a regularly established publication which contains essentially news, information and advertising, usually printed on relatively inexpensive basis (Wikipedia, 2011). Even with technological advancements in the world, the Sri Lankan newspaper industry still depends on traditional methods. Hence, the Sri Lankan newspaper industry faces many problems, especially inefficiency in the business process and the dissatisfaction of industry stakeholders. However the demand for the newspapers is still high. Therefore, the use of E-commerce in its business process can easily increase the efficiency of the Sri Lankan newspaper industry.

This paper focuses on identifying a feasible E-commerce solution to the Sri Lankan newspaper industry. Therefore, paper examines the general process of newspaper industry and its issues. The research concludes with the identified feasible E-commerce solution to the newspaper industry in Sri Lanka. The solution is carefully designed into E-commerce application call E -Ad Center to offer solutions to the problems currently faced by the industry.

Methodology

The study aims to explore “How” and “Why” questions as the main research question was how to develop an e-commerce solution which is feasible for the newspaper industry in Sri Lanka. This study focuses on a contemporary phenomenon in a real-life context. These reasons prompted the researchers to adopt the case study approach as the main research strategy (Yin, 1994). The research has mainly gathered data from major five newspaper companies in Sri Lanka. These data have been used to conduct the research case studies.

Michel Porter’s value chain model (Porter, 1985) and incremental learning model (Jain *et al.*, 2011) were initially used in the case study analysis of the business process and its issues related to the five newspaper companies.

Finally, findings of each case study were used to recognize a feasible e-commerce solution to Newspaper Industry in Sri Lanka.

Results and discussion

The researchers identified the primary activities of the general process of the newspaper industry and its issues which provide the basis for this development. It was evident that sixteen common industry issues were uncovered during the analysis where twelve were

related to advertisement collection and handling process. Findings revealed that most of the companies are using primitive technology and E-Commerce applications.

The developed E-Ad Center is a web based application designed using cloud computing architecture to address the issues related to advertisement collection and handling process in the Sri Lankan newspaper industry. Mainly this system allows clients and ad agents to place their advertisement via online to any newspaper in Sri Lanka. This application eliminates those twelve issues identified.

The final outcomes of this research can be identified as the enhancement of the industry stake holders' satisfaction, increase in the efficiency of the industry business processes and saving time and resources of the industry and their customers.

References

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