

Emerging Markets Queries in Finance and Business

Marketing research regarding the Internet usage among the population of the Mures County

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Abstract

Given the changing environment in which we live and the many technologies that influence our daily life, it is important to know which the people reaction is or how their behaviour and needs evolves. The importance of marketing research, including the consumer behavior study, emerges from the fact that they provide valuable information regarding preferences, consumption habits and consumer profile. This represents also the starting point for decisions making and for setting the marketing strategy. In this paper I've done a field research regarding the Internet usage among the population of the Mures County, Romania, which had as main objective to identify patterns of Internet usage and to establish Internet user's profile.

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1. Introduction

Given the fact that we live in a dynamic society, in which the consumer needs, and behavior is changing rapidly from one period to another and the products / services coming to meet these needs diversify a lot, information plays a critical role for most of us.

As most of the authors agree, consumer behavior is a major objective for organizations because of the way this modifies influences their present and future Ciucan-Rusu, 2011. Enterprises will struggle to know the way buyers think and act, in the desire to develop strategies that ensure demand for their products / services and for

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having an advantage in the competitive environment.

When we want to make a market research we should take into consideration not only consumers' requirements but their wishes and aspirations as well, because these things can have a major importance for the enterprises Gabor, 2007.

Lately, due to the unprecedented development of the Internet, the society has experienced major changes regarding the informational environment propagation. On the one hand, companies had to adapt to the technological progress and had to redefine their business Vasiliu, et al, 2012. On the other hand, the Internet, due to its advantages, has become the most commonly used environment for communication and information. Because the Internet does not take into account the constraints of space and time, communications are gaining ground and the information travels faster and farther than ever before. Things that were unthinkable a few years ago, now became real, businesses are concluded, decisions are made and transactions are completed in a fraction of time. The impact of the Internet in everyday life of both companies and ordinary citizens is increasingly higher; the network has grown exponentially, the number of Internet users increased with over 500% between 2000 and 2011.

WORLD INTERNET USAGE AND POPULATION STATISTICS December 31, 2011						
World Regions	Population (2011 Est.)	Internet Users Dec. 31, 2000	Internet Users Latest Data	Penetration (% Population)	Growth 2000-2011	Users % of Table
Africa	1,037,524,058	4,514,400	139,875,242	13.5 %	2,988.4 %	6.2 %
Asia	3,879,740,877	114,304,000	1,016,799,076	26.2 %	789.6 %	44.8 %
Europe	816,426,346	105,096,093	500,723,686	61.3 %	376.4 %	22.1 %
Middle East	216,258,843	3,284,800	77,020,995	35.6 %	2,244.8 %	3.4 %
North America	347,394,870	108,096,800	273,067,546	78.6 %	152.6 %	12.0 %
Latin America / Carib.	597,283,165	18,068,919	235,819,740	39.5 %	1,205.1 %	10.4 %
Oceania / Australia	35,426,995	7,620,480	23,927,457	67.5 %	214.0 %	1.1 %
WORLD TOTAL	6,930,055,154	360,985,492	2,267,233,742	32.7 %	528.1 %	100.0 %

Fig. 1. – Number of Internet users in the world

The international statistics provided by Internet World Stats shows that currently about 30% of the world population and 40% of our country population is using the Internet to search information, to purchase various products or just for fun. In this paper I've realized a marketing research which aims to first identify the preferences, consumption habits and profile of Internet users, and second the online purchasing behavior characteristics, factors that are influencing the purchasing decision and the importance of the online environment among population of Mures County.

2. Methodology

The research conducted for this paper was a quantitative one, consisting in a statistical survey based on a questionnaire.

The research involved going through five **stages** Kotler, 2008 as follows:

- **Defining the problem and the research objectives** - as I mentioned before, research focused on the Internet usage among population of Mures County. The main objectives of the study were:
 - Identify patterns of the Internet usage, how often, when, for what, time spend on the Internet, the place from where they access the Internet;
 - Identify the users profile;
 - Identify the characteristics of online purchasing behavior whether they are buying, from where, what, how do they pay, which method of delivery they preferred;

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