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E-commerce adoption by small medium enterprises: rural and regional general practices

Sangeetha Ramu
University of Wollongong

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E-COMMERCE ADOPTION
BY SMALL MEDIUM ENTERPRISES: RURAL AND REGIONAL
GENERAL PRACTICES

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the award of the degree of

Master of Information and Communication Technology (Research)

From

University of Wollongong

By

SANGEETHA RAMU

SCHOOL OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND COMPUTER SCIENCE
FACULTY OF INFORMATICS

2006

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ABSTRACT

There is a crisis in healthcare provision in remote and rural locations, as more and more GPs are leaving the countryside for positions in metropolitan centres. E-commerce may help to overcome the lack of services and remoteness of a country practice. But rural and regional GPs are not adopting E-Commerce at the same rate as other Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs). This study aims to answer the question: *What are the major issues faced by rural and regional General Practice in adopting E-commerce?*

The study presents the results of a survey of E-commerce adoption by GPs in a rural location (South East NSW) and a regional location (The Illawarra region of NSW). The survey gathers data on the business characteristics of the GPs and their perception of the factors influencing E-commerce adoption and the benefits and disadvantages of E-commerce adoption. Statistical analysis of the results has confirmed some of the trends found in the literature but, more interestingly, our analysis also challenges some of the most widely observed trends. Overall, the results show that rural and regional GPs (SMEs) perceive E-commerce adoption differently to their metropolitan counterparts. In addition, there are differences in the perception of E-commerce adoption by service-oriented SMEs (GPs) compared to other industry sectors, such as manufacturing, retail etc.

University of Wollongong

Thesis Declaration

I, Sangeetha Ramu, being a candidate for the degree of Masters by Research hereby declare that work described in the attached thesis is my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Wollongong or for any degree in any other university or institution.

Signature

Date

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