



Importance Of E-Commerce Adaptation in SMEs

Importancia De La Adaptación Del E-Commerce En Las PyMEs

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Resumen

Teniendo en cuenta que por consecuencia de la pandemia causada por el COVID-19, las pequeñas y medianas empresas tuvieron que reinventarse con el E-commerce para poder mantenerse a lo largo de la pandemia, y que por esta han surgido nuevos hábitos de consumo de las personas a través de las compras en línea. Usando una metodología descriptiva documental, El presente artículo tiene como objetivo analizar la información presentada en diferentes fuentes acerca del desarrollo del E-commerce en las Pymes, mostrar que estrategias adoptar para una buena implementación del E-commerce, y mencionar las ventajas y beneficios más comunes de la implementación de esta práctica para las Pymes. Como resultados se obtiene que conocer el modelo de negocio, la plataforma en la cual se va a vender, la variedad de medios de pagos disponibles, el operador logístico y una buena campaña de marketing digital hace que la implementación del E-commerce sea de manera satisfactoria. Se concluye que el E-commerce es lo primordial si se quiere llegar a mercados extranjeros al igual que es una manera más rápida de crecer frente a la competencia.

Palabras Claves: Comercio Electrónico, E-commerce, Implementación, Marketing, Pymes.

Abstract

Taking into account that as a consequence of the pandemic caused by COVID-19, small and medium-sized companies had to reinvent themselves with E-commerce to be able to keep up throughout the pandemic, and that because of this new consumption habits of people have emerged through online shopping. The objective of this article is to analyze the information presented in different sources about the development of E-commerce in SMEs, to show which strategies to adopt for a good implementation of E-commerce, and to mention the most common advantages and benefits of the implementation of this practice for SMEs. The results show that knowing the business model, the platform on which to sell, the variety of payment methods available, the logistics operator and a good digital marketing campaign makes the implementation of E-commerce satisfactory. It is concluded that E-commerce is essential if you want to reach foreign markets as it is a faster way to grow against the competition.

Key Words: Ecommerce, Electroniccommerce, Implementation, Mar-keting, Smes.

Introduction

The Internet has established itself as an advantage and a key commercial factor, because through virtual shopping, customers and suppliers can mutually benefit by maintaining contact through networks, thus expanding the sale and acquisition of products and services (Ríos et al., 2017). Hence, the importance of E-commerce, which in its most basic definition is the mechanism of marketing and buying and selling of products, goods or services through the Internet. This makes it possible to have a greater reach of our target customer anywhere in the country or even in the world. As time goes by, there are more and more people creating entrepreneurship and this can be verified as in Colombia between January and June 2021 more than 166,000 companies were created and of these 99.97% are SMEs, which makes it necessary to adapt correctly to all E-commerce practices to reach more potential customers (Confecámaras, 2021). Similarly, it is well known that the use of e-commerce has become a fundamental strategy in improving business processes in the most diverse areas of the economy (Sánchez et al., 2018). It is even as fundamental as the very structuring of the organization according to international schemes and standards such as IFRS (Solano, 2017). Thus, it becomes a fundamental tool in the development and sustainable growth of SMEs (Dávila et al., 2018).

According to data from the Ministry of Information Technologies and Communications (MinTIC), in Colombia for the first quarter of 2021, fixed internet connectivity reached 8.05 million accesses and mobile internet connections reached 32.9 million. These figures indicate that more Colombians will be connected to the Internet, which makes them potential customers for SMEs (Colprensa, 2021). Likewise, it is necessary to seek strategies in order to achieve the restructuring of its productive process under the social, environmental and business perspective (Cárdenas-García et al., 2018). Due

to the above mentioned, this reflection article will aim to analyze the information presented in different sources about the development of E-commerce in SMEs. Likewise, to show what strategies to adopt for a good implementation of E-commerce. Determine what are the most common advantages and benefits of the implementation of this practice for SMEs (Velasquez, 2019).

This article starts by analyzing the sites that present statistics about the practice of E-commerce in Colombia and the world, followed by showing the results of the advantages of its implementation, and a section of conclusions.

Materials and Methods.

This research work was based on the collection of information from other websites and articles related to the development of E-commerce in Colombia and the world. Since there is a lot of information on this topic, only articles published between 2019 and 2021 will be considered.

The method of this work focused on the search and analysis of various sources of information. Search filters were determined with the keywords E-commerce, SMEs, advantages and implementation, as well as the primary focus on the importance of knowing the steps to follow to implement E-commerce in SMEs (Restrepo, n.d.).

Development and discussion

How has been the evolution of E-commerce in Colombia and in the region?

Over the years not only in Colombia but also in Latin America there has been a favorable evolution of sales through e-commerce, being 2020 a trigger of this practice caused by the confinements because of COVID-19, only in

that year sales of over \$66,765 million dollars were recorded in Latin America which compared to 2019 is an increase of 66% of sales by this means (La República, 2021).

In Colombia the impulse of E-commerce in 2020 was 54.1% compared to 2019 and this evolution is also due to the confinements that took place in 2020 in the country, but it is also expected that by 2021 the sales made by e-commerce will increase more which is a great opportunity for SMEs to put their products on the network and also be part of this boom in E-commerce (El Tiempo, 2021).

SMEs in E-commerce

A recent study shows the importance of having E-commerce in SMEs, given that 70% of purchases in 2020 were made by this means, and where most entrepreneurs say that through e-commerce you can reach many more customers compared to traditional sales. These survey results suggest that we must be prepared as SMEs to venture into the world of e-commerce, which is booming in the Colombian economy (González, 2020).

Strategies to enter the E-commerce as SMEs

It is important first to know what the business model is, and in e-commerce we can find the following:

- Business-to-consumer, consists of selling the product or service to the end consumer.
- Business to business, consists of selling the product or service to another company.
- From consumer to business, it consists of offering personal services available to companies (Fernández, 2020).

Once the business model has been identified, it is important to determine which e-commerce platform to use, the most prominent being the following:

merce platform to use, the most prominent being the following:

Shopify
PrestaShop
Woocommerce
Magento

These platforms allow you to create a digital store and it is important to choose the right one according to the business model (Villaveces, 2021).

Once the two previous steps have been taken, it is important to determine which options and means of online payments are available here in Colombia, and the more different payment options the customer has, the more likely he/she is to make the sale. The most popular means of payment are: payment by credit card, payment by debit card, cash payment, payment on delivery, and payment by pse (Colombian Chamber of Electronic Commerce, 2019).

But this does not end there, it is important to see how the customer will receive the product in the place he wants, either at home or at work, for this it is important to determine which logistics operator will be chosen, either for national, local or international deliveries. Here are some of the options to consider:

- For national shipments: Servientrega, Deprisa, Envía, Interrapidísimo, TCC, Coordinadora.
- For local shipments: UberEats, Rappi or any other available in your city.
- For international shipments: Servientrega, TCC as well as the multinationals DHL and FedEx.

Here there are many different options of logistics operators to hire and deliver the product to the end customer, just as you have to take into account the delivery time so that the customer has a greater satisfaction (Medina, 2019).

Once the mentioned before is done now it is important to attract customers to the online store, then you have to create a Digital Marketing campaign so that potential customers begin to arrive and learn about the product and the store. You can start through social networks, but it is important to employ a good Digital Marketing strategy to also position yourself as people are looking for products offered through the internet (Cámara Colombiana de Comercio Electrónico, 2019).

Advantages and benefits of E-commerce for SMEs

The implementation of E-commerce to SMEs makes them grow faster since their products can be marketed anywhere in the country in a faster way. (Velásquez, 2019).

Also the implementation of E-commerce optimizes the spaces available to the public to sell products, saving costs in the maintenance of commercial establishments (Jiménez, 2019).

Another advantage is the availability to observe the products, since it is available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week for the customer to access the online store and make their purchase no matter the time. (Súarez, 2019)

An opportunity that arises in e-commerce is to have a differentiation against the competition, and always seek customer loyalty by any means. For example, if the SME is dedicated to the sale of tangible products, one way to captivate the customer is to have a good logistics process for the dispatch of products and timely delivery of this, as well as having a good returns policy because it is important to remember that the customer firstly does not have contact with the product before the purchase is made, and sometimes they may not be completely satisfied with the product and this could be the case for a good returns policy that generates confidence in the customer and this is one of the reasons that leads to customer loyalty. (Banco Finandi-

na, 2020).

Another advantage of the implementation of E-commerce is that a new brand can easily reach the international public, and for this it is important to have a good logistics company that makes international shipments and thus be able to offer a good price to the customer. In this way, selling internationally is a great feat, which can allow it to grow much faster and earn profits more quickly than local competitors (Ferreira, 2019).

Conclusions

The great progress that Colombia has been making in terms of Internet coverage, means that more people are connected and it is a great opportunity to offer our product through e-commerce. It is important to evolve in how things are being sold and not only limit ourselves physically in a local market. With the implementation of E-commerce is one of the easiest ways to reach customers anywhere in the world. It has been shown that e-commerce companies have a higher profitability and a significant cost reduction compared to physical stores and also the combination of these makes them have a greater customer loyalty when buying. Implementing E-commerce in SMEs is not achieved in an improvised way, having a good structure makes the business much more profitable and sustainable over time.

Recommendations

It is recommended that for a good implementation of E-commerce in SMEs and that it be lasting, you also take into account everything related to digital marketing, since developing sales strategies is very important to emerge in this type of commerce.

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