**Abstract:** User perceptions of website design (for Information Content, Information Design, Navigation Design, Visual Design), Website Trust, and Transaction Security are examined for differences in an eight country sample. Motivation for the investigation includes: (1) to test and compare user reactions to website design in countries with different degrees of uncertainty avoidance, (2) to consider user reactions based on country economic and technological conditions related to the theory of institutional trust and social capital, and (3) to extend clustering theory and the GLOBE cultural cluster model to determine if culturally similar countries group regarding user perceptions of websites. Overall and as predicted, users in low uncertainty avoidance, high institutional trust and social capital countries such as Canada and the USA have the most favorable perceptions of website design. An interesting finding is that while country economic and technological conditions may temper user perceptions in some instances, overall culture is a stronger predictor. Clustering theory is a useful determinant of user perceptions, and there is strong support that users within a given cultural cluster have similar requirements regarding website design.  
**Keywords:** Culture; Website design; Website trust; Transaction security; Theory of trust and social capital; Clustering theory

**Abstract:** In e-commerce applications, vendors can construct detailed profiles about customers’ preferences, which is known as buyer profiling. These profiles can then be used by vendors in order to perform practices such as price discrimination, poor judgment, etc. The use of pseudonyms and, specially, changing pseudonyms from time to time are known to minimize profiling, minimizing the capacity of vendors to perform such practices in turn. Although there are some frameworks and tools that support pseudonym change, there are few proposals that suggest or directly change the pseudonym in an automated fashion. Instead, users are usually provided with the mechanisms to change pseudonyms but without any advise on when they actually use these mechanisms. In this paper, we present an approach to control buyer profiling by means of automated pseudonym changes performed according to human privacy attitudes. We also present an application scenario and an evaluation of our proposal.  
**Keywords:** E-commerce; Privacy; Buyer profiling; Pseudonymity; Automated pseudonym change; Customer profiling; Agent-based e-commerce

3. **An extended Q-gram algorithm for calculating the relevance factor of products in electronic marketplaces.** By: Kostas Kolomvatsos, Stathes Hadjieftymiades. *Electronic Commerce*
Research & Applications, 12(6): 397-411. Abstract: Intelligent agents offer a number of advantages when used in electronic markets. In such environments, intelligent agents can represent users acting as buyers or sellers. On the buyer’s side, an intelligent agent can undertake the responsibility of finding and purchasing products that meet the owner’s needs. In this process, the agent should decide if a product, offered by a seller, is relevant to the owner’s preferences. We propose an algorithm for calculating the relevance factor of a product based on the product description, constraints defined by the buyer and the product’s quality of service characteristics, such as the delivery time or the seller trust level. The proposed algorithm is based on widely known similarity assessment techniques. However, we also propose a new similarity assessment scheme based on the Q-grams technique. We describe the proposed solution and evaluate our methodology. The results show that the algorithm is an efficient way for the relevance factor calculation and quality of service characteristics play an important role in the calculation process. Quality of service factor calculation provides an additional level of intelligence in the proposed methodology. Keywords: Electronic markets; Intelligent agents; Product matching; Similarity

4. Commodity or competitive advantage? Analysis of the ERP value paradox. By: Pei-Fang Hsu. Electronic Commerce Research & Applications, 12(6): 412-424. Abstract: A true e-business enabled firm needs the support from a well-tuned enterprise resource planning (ERP) system for providing real time data. However, many companies complain that after their huge investments in ERP systems, they found the ERP systems do not bring them new orders, new profits, or competitive advantage as ERP vendors claim. Academic studies also found mixed results regarding ERP's payoff. In line with resource based view (RBV), the study proposes an integrated model to shed light on the ERP value paradox. We try to answer "With what organizational resources and by building what firm specific capabilities, the investment in ERP systems may bring firms competitive advantage". Using a sample of 150 ERP and e-business adopters in the US, we found that (1) organizational resources such as managerial skills and organizational change management play a more important role than IT resources (ERP, e-Business technologies) in generating business integration capability. (2) However, neither IT resources nor organizational resources directly provide firms with competitive advantage. Instead, business integration capability built from the two resources plays a mediating role through which business achieves competitive advantage. Keywords: B2B supply chain integration; Enterprise resources planning (ERP); Resource based view (RBV); IT value paradox

5. The role of atmospheric cues in online impulse-buying behavior. By: Arne Floh, Maria Madlberger. Electronic Commerce Research & Applications, 12(6): 425-439. Abstract: This study extends a stimulus–organism–response (S–O–R) model to include impulse-buying behavior, which plays a vital role in electronic shopping but has not gained much attention in e-commerce research. Grounding our research in environmental psychology, we test the effects of virtual atmospheric cues on online impulse-buying behavior and spending, via a consumer survey. The study applies elaborated mediating variables (shopping enjoyment and impulsiveness) to develop a structural model linking three categories of atmospheric cues of an electronic store (content, design, and navigation) to approach behavior variables (impulse-buying behavior and expenditure). The results support the validity of the S–O–R model in the context of online impulse-buying behavior and show a significant positive effect of two dimensions of virtual atmospheric cues (design and navigation). Keywords: Impulse buying; Electronic commerce; Stimulus–organism–response model; Environmental psychology; Store atmosphere; Online shopping; Online consumer behavior; Structural equation model
6. The impact of information and communication technologies on the costs of democracy. By: Roumen Vragov, Nanda Kumar. Electronic Commerce Research & Applications, 12(6): 440-448. Abstract: Recent developments in information and communication technologies (ICTs) can change the way strategic organizational decisions are negotiated and voted upon. We propose an analytical framework that investigates the effect of such technologies on the costs of the decision-making process in organizations by incorporating a technology variable in an already well-known model of public decision-making. The framework is applicable to any large group decision setting where collective decisions are made by voting, such as shareholders’ meetings, local and federal government meetings. We apply the framework to derive policies that will help to decrease the costs related to the democratic process. The first policy requires that governments should invest more in technologies that support multi-lateral communication and negotiation among citizens, and the second requires that citizens should use better voting mechanisms than simple majority voting to make decisions. Keywords: Constitutional economics; Electronic government; External costs; Information and communication technologies; Multi-lateral communication; Negotiation; Shareholder democracy; Voting

7. Examining the impact of rich media on consumer willingness to pay in online stores. By: Ting Li, Zornitsa Meshkova. Electronic Commerce Research & Applications, 12(6): 449-461. Abstract: This research examines the impact of rich media on purchase intentions and willingness to pay in online stores. Via an online experiment, we tested the effects of two rich media presentation formats: product videos and virtual product experience, and compared them with static displays. The results confirm that the rich media displays enhanced the feeling of informedness about the examined products and increased excitement regarding the shopping experience. Virtual product experience had a direct positive effect on consumer purchase intentions, suggesting that virtual product experience-focused tools have the potential to outperform passive videos. Moreover, consumers showed higher willingness to pay values for experience products than for search products when interaction was possible. Keywords: Consumer behavior; Excitement; Informedness; Interactive media; Online experiment; Product videos; Purchase intention; Rich media; Videos; Virtual product experience; Willingness to pay