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e-Business in local SMEs in Tampere Region
Case: eYrityspalvelu and Internet marketing-course participants

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ABSTRACT

ICT has been part of some standard business processes for a long time now. As the SME sector is employing a great proportion of the work force in Tampere Region, the level of automated or rationalized processes in the sector appears to be interesting. This research is exploring what e-business actually is and in which level the SMEs in Tampere Region are utilizing e-business solutions. The research work started from a need to understand what e-business actually is and to study its current state in Tampere Region, and ended up studying also the motives affecting the e-business adaptation, screening out the development of the past three years, and forecasting the future actions of the sample SMEs.

The report can be divided into two parts: a theoretical part, in which online sources, business publications and print books were used as source material to define and explain the parts of e-business; and a practical part, in which two empirical studies with quantitative results were conducted.

The research is commissioned by the Federation of Finnish Enterprises in Tampere Region and the e-business-survey is a continuation of the federation's annual researches targeting eYrityspalvelu-project's customers. This year the sample was widened to include also the participants of an Internet marketing course. The smaller scale survey targeting discussion board users was conducted to support the theoretical part of the Internet marketing. Electronic forms were used in the both surveys and the results were analyzed with Tixel.

The research results show that the level in which the e-business tools are utilized is considerably good among the sample SMEs. The SMEs experience a need for development in numerous factors of business but are timorous with any actions. The economic decline has reduced SMEs' investment intentions in 2009, as the amount and number of the intended investments were both bigger in 2007 and 2008.

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List of terms

Banner advertisements	– The square or rectangular shaped advertisements that is usually located in the side of a page or on the top. These may appear as still pictures or with some effects, such as blinking or sliding texts.
e-business	– a way of doing business by utilizing the electronic tools in business processes in a wider scale than concentrating only on e-commerce transactions
e-commerce	– Conducting commercial transactions online. The content of the transactions may be money, information, or products, which are usually delivered in exchange for compensation.
ICT	–“(Information and Communication technology) is an umbrella term that includes any communication device or application, encompassing: radio, television, cellular phones, computer and network hardware and software, satellite systems and so on, as well as the various services and applications associated with them, such as videoconferencing and distance learning.” (What is ICT?- Definition from whatis.com. 2004)
Information system	– A system grouping the interaction of ICT and the related components (people, information, and processes) together in a way that the interactions among all the components are affecting the performance of the system
SME	– micro-, small,- and medium sized enterprises
-micro enterprises	– “employ fewer than 10 employees, annual turnover or annual balance sheet total does not exceed 2 million euro
-small enterprises	– employ fewer than 50 persons and whose annual turnover or annual balance sheet total does not exceed 10 million euro
-medium enterprises	– employ fewer than 250 persons and whose annual turnover does not exceed 50 million euro and the annual balance sheet total does not exceed 43 million euro” (SME definition. User guide and model declaration. 2005. 14)
Application software	– (also called computer software) is designed to help the user to perform a singular or multiple related specific tasks (Application software. Wikipedia. 2010)

1 Introduction to e-Business and Digitalization

Implementing the electronic way of doing business requires investment in IT software and solutions. Besides the money factor, time and human capital need to be invested as well. In some cases acquiring e-Business tools requires also commitment and agreement of third parties or intermediaries (as an example Enterprise Resource Planning system interconnects several information systems of the members of one value chain).

In the year 2010 it's not exceptional to handle transactions, customer relationships, marketing activities and lots of other activities digitally. Many service providers have digitalized their services or are offering partial digital solutions and even more organizations have digitalized their internal procedures totally or partially. The stage of digitalization varies, as the needs of organizations are distinct.

The most important driver for the digitalization of services is naturally the customers, who have adopted the electronic way of doing business. If the customers wouldn't have preparedness to electronic interaction, it would be useless to offer electronic solutions, as one of the survey participants justified his enterprise's low level of digitalization. Still it's evident that an enormous development has occurred within the last decade among the businesses in private and public sectors, as well as among the end consumers, and this development has been enabled by new information and communication technology (ICT).

The new technology is often seen as means of saving time, money and resources. Storing piles of files into tiny hard drives or CDs as an example is obviously convenient, as the content doesn't require much physical space and is easily available. While measuring the pros and cons of some e-business tools, such as eCRM applications, the start up and running expenses, such as purchasing or leasing a product, costs of updating or modification, must be taken into consideration as well.

Kotler et al. (2002. 22) praised the Internet already in the beginning of the 21st century as "the most dramatic new technology driving the connected age". The importance of the Internet has only increased after the beginning of the 21st century, as the network is now accessible through mobile phones, laptops and other wireless devices, and most importantly: wherever, whenever. Checking out the inventory on the other side of the globe is perfectly possible today, without being tied to operate with wired devices in fixed offices.

As mentioned in the abstract, this research work contains a theoretical part, which is examining and explaining the content of e-business in general, two case studies and a conclusion part in the end, which is a mixture of both theory and the survey results.

During the pre-stage of the research, which was mainly gaining information on the subject, a surprising notion was made: valid definition and an extensive presentation of all the different factors included in the concept of e-business were difficult to find from any single source. Although it has been studied a lot during the last decade, very few sources are handling the subject thoroughly. Many books are written by the experts of one specific area and the digitalization of business processes is then handled from only one perspective, focusing on one business factor and leaving the rest of the factors aside. There was a need for an in-depth study of e-business that would introduce the subject in its entirety.

The theory part in this report is aimed to give a good general picture of what e-business is; offering relevant information to the reader regardless of the field of business the reader may be representing. Understanding the meaning of different business processes and operations, and the role that e-business plays in each area, is also enabling the exploitation and adaptation of the results of the e-business-survey introduced in the chapter 7.

The main question that the research tries to find an answer to is whether the interrelationships between business processes and the external factors are influencing the adaptation of e-business in SME sector. Are the enterprises with existing web pages more likely to have an e-CRM program in use, or does the changed economic situation have an affection on enterprises' expectations of growth or investment intentions? To find out the answers to these questions an empirical study of e-business in SME sector was required.

An annual research of the Federation of the Finnish Enterprises in Tampere Region examining the situation of eYrityspalvelu customers was the basis for the e-business-survey conducted as part of the final thesis. The survey represents the study of 2009 with few modifications added to the original body of the survey. The sample was this year expanded to the participants of an Internet marketing course to increase the number of respondents.

The client federation has been annually examining the state of e-business adaptation, functionality of the current information systems, investment intentions, development needs and needs for a change of ownership. As the main question was in which level the sample SMEs are utilizing electronic tools in any field of business, and how they are experiencing the functionality of several business factors, marketing-related questions were added to the previously used set of questions to ensure the fair coverage of all business areas. eYrityspalvelu-project, which is strongly related with the study, will be introduced in the following chapter.

This research was executed as a quantitative survey with a main target of analyzing the current stage and predicting the future stage of electronic business adaptation in a wide scale within the focus group. The questionnaire was divided into sections handling the current stage, future visions, and respondents' willingness to develop and invest on various business areas.

The idea for the other quantitative research came while the data collecting process for the first case study had already begun. The small entrepreneurs in general seemed to be very skeptical about the benefits of social media in business. As the use of social media on the other hand has become extremely popular among several age groups in Finland, there seemed to be a need to examine whether this media has such an impact on the consumers that could be turned to favor the SMEs and if it does, how strong is the impact.

The focus group of this case study was narrowed down to exist of the users of only one conversation forum. The forum is targeted mainly at mothers living in Nokia, Tampere Region and the main goal of the study was to find out how powerful influence social media (in this case only the discussion board) and its content has on the users. The case study will be further introduced in the chapter of Digital Marketing.

The last part will be a closure that utilizes the information represented in the previous chapters. This summary will present the conclusions that can be made based on the theory part and the research results presented in the report. Whether the answers to the original research dilemmas can be found will be evaluated in this closure chapter. The dilemmas are:

- If a connection between acquiring different e-business tools can be found
- Are there some significant signs that the external influencers would have caused a change in the e-business adaptation among sample or in the opinions and expectations of entrepreneurs participating in the survey in general

2 eYrityspalvelu-project

The e-business research is commissioned by the Federation of Finnish Enterprises in Tampere Region, a local division of the Federation of Finnish Enterprises. More precisely, the eYrityspalvelu-project that is facilitated by the federation (in co-operation with other parties) had a need for a survey. eYrityspalvelu has regularly conducted a survey to measure the state of e-business adaptation among their customers. As the case study was conducted based on the needs of this eYrityspalvelu, the project and its previous studies will be introduced in this chapter. The actual research will be introduced in detail in the empirical part of the thesis.

The federation has been actively involved with the eYrityspalvelu-project since it was launched after a pilot phase in February 2004. Besides the federation, the project's important interest group contained the federation's local associations, Tampere chamber of commerce, TE-centre of Tampere Region, eBRC, City of Tampere, and some local urban districts. Also Professia Oy has been executing and coordinating the project. (Raporttitiivistelmä: eTampere... 2004. 6)

The eYrityspalvelu-project was part of a huge eTampere program that included several simultaneous projects and engaged a great number of partners in cooperation (Raporttitiivistelmä: eTampere –tietoyhteiskuntaohjelman toimintakaudelta 1.7.2003 -31.12.2003. 2004. 6). The program ended in 2005 after functioning for five years (eTampere web site). More information about the program can be found at <http://www.etampere.fi/materiaalit/loppuraportti.pdf>, where the final report of the project is published.

The goal of eYrityspalvelu service was to "enhance business activity of SMEs located in Tampere Region and to improve enterprises' chances for sustainable growth" (eYrityspalvelun loppuraportti 1.1.-31.12.2005). The service is open for all SMEs located in Tampere Region. In practice customers can approach the consultants by phone or through the Internet when they're interested in the service. The consultant meets the customer, analyses and estimates the current situation and makes propositions for the future. When services or products need to be purchased or a leasing relationship needs to be established, the consultant offers always three different service or product suppliers of which the customer may choose the most suitable option. The service doesn't obligate the customers in any way, as the final decisions are made by the entrepreneurs themselves.

3 The local business region

The economic situation is one of the dominant factors driving or holding back the adaptation of electronic business operations. As the focus group of the survey consists of SMEs operating in Tampere Region, local economic situation and its influence on SMEs is essential. Therefore an overview to the prevailing situation in Tampere Region and a short repetition of the recession in the early 90's is given here in this chapter.

One proof of the impact that economic trends have on the Finnish entrepreneurship is the phenomena seen in context of the last recession: the number of enterprises decreased by over 30 000 enterprises in the beginning of 1990's, but after the year 1994 the number faced 2 per cent annual growth until 2001, when the improved employment situation encouraged people to leave entrepreneurship for other employment opportunities. (Palm et al. 2003. 9)

62 sub regions out of the total 69 located in the mainland of Finland, have faced some economic downturn as compared to the situation a year ago, states the Alueelliset talousnäköymät syksyllä 2009 (Regional economy prospects in autumn 2009) -report of TE-centre and Ministry of employment and the economy (Nieminen. 2009. 8). Tampere Region is one of these sub-regions, as exporting industries, especially technology industry, play an important role in the region and make the business area reliant on the world economics.

The whole industry sector is currently going through crises in the form of layoffs and sackings, which is an implication of declining demand since autumn 2008. The exporting sector faced the consequences of the recession first, and various export-engaged industries had discovered circa 20-37 per cent decline in their turnover within one year (measured in August 2009). The decrease in domestic purchasing power was in the end of 2009 expected to start affecting the open sector and to decrease the turnover in retail sector. The retail sector had by then discovered only 3% decrease in turnover. (Nieminen. 2009. 58)

According to TE-centre's measurements (Table 1 below) the economic life- and entrepreneurship sector as well as employment situation in Tampere region are in a lot worse condition than a year ago. The unemployment is expected to increase during the next 12 months compared to the current state. Economic life and entrepreneurship sector however has experienced the heaviest downturn already and within the next 12 months situation continues getting weaker, although the speed is expected to be from now on slower than earlier.

Table 1: Economic views of Tampere Region 2009 (Nieminen. 2009. 58)

Tampere Region TE-centre	Now 1)	6 months 2)	12 months 3)
Economic life and entrepreneurship	--	-	-
Unemployment	--	--	--
Availability of labour force	+	+	+
<p>++ very good, + good, 0 unchanged/ in current level, - weaker, -- a lot weaker</p> <p>Estimate of the current situation in comparison to the situation a year ago</p> <p>Situation in 6 months compared to the current situation</p> <p>Situation after a year compared to the current situation</p>			

The overall unemployment rate in Tampere region was 11.5 per cent at the end of June 2009, while a year ago it was 8.2 per cent. There are regional differences inside the Tampere region, which are mainly due to distinct business structures. More industry-centralized areas are now the most heavily impacted as a result of the declined demand and the majority of the unemployed people registered in TE-centre's records were from the industry sector. (Nieminen. 2009. 58, 59)

Noticeable in the table below is that Southern Tampere region and Tampere sub-region are the only two areas in Tampere region, where the number of unemployed job applicants exceeds the number of entrepreneurs. The unemployment rate is also highest in these two sub-regions. All the indexes are strongly due to the heavy emphasize on industrial production in both sub-regions.

Table 2: Economic view of Tampere Region's sub-regions 2008-2009 (TE-centre. 2009. pages 59-63)

	Number of entrepreneurs (2008)	Inhabitants (end of 2008)	Unemployed work applicants (June 2009)	Unemployment rate (%)
Southern Tampere region	2 224	42 814	2 833	13,9
South-West Tampere region	1 984	27 929	861	7,1
South-East Tampere region	623	8 055	284	8
North-West Tampere region	2 050	27 148	1 274	10,4
Tampere sub-region	20 006	335 711	21 938	12,8
Upper Tampere region	2 354	38 989	1 666	10,4

If the trough of the economic cycle will be reached in 2010, as has been predicted, it's expected that after few years the amount of enterprises will face some growth again.

4 Small and large organization

Fillis and Wagner (2005) investigated the differences between larger and smaller companies and were able to identify three differences in connection to the companies' size.

1. Because of "limited customer base, product line and owner/firm's objectives" smaller firms are not in as stable ground as the bigger ones.
2. Likelihood to introduce new products or services is much higher for smaller companies.
3. Small companies are more adjustable and able to react to the changes in the environment faster than the bigger companies.

(¹Barnes. 2007. 132, 133)

According to this theory, the smaller the company is, the more the decisions are made locally, often by only one person. Structures and command chains are not complicated, limited amount of employees and customers also enable efficient informing and training with minimal effort, when such change in procedures occurs that requires actions.

Based on this information smaller enterprises with their higher capability in adapting and reaction speed would have great chances to survive the prevailing recession and to face the ultimate changes in the market as a winner. On the other hand, human resources are more limited.

¹Fillis and Wagner. 2005. E-business development: an exploratory investigation of the small firm

5 E-commerce and e-Business

“Policymakers and scholars believed that adequate use of information and communication technology (ICT) augments the competitiveness of employees and strengthens the position of companies in global economy “ (Milis 2008, abstract). A special emphasis should be on the word adequate, as proper implementation and competent usage are two very critical factors driving or preventing attaining the maximal benefit of electronic business instruments. The requirement before implementing ICT, in means to successfully renew or support business operations, is to have basic knowledge and understanding over the information technology (IT) and its operational principles.

Electronic operations are penetrating to business areas that are essential for every enterprise, regardless of the field of business or the sort of customers. Formerly otherwise handled procedures are now taking electronic form: many communication channels are taking advantage of ICT and even official services are becoming electronic.

The change towards more electronic business operations is slowly becoming unavoidable, and the forms and the level of adaptation may vary business by business. Electronic business operations can be acquired to be next to the traditional procedures or to replace the old ones, to cover all the factors or just to support the management, or on execution of one specific area like CRM, HRM, or financial management.

While examining the concepts of e-commerce and e-business further, a reader will most likely face the terms “transaction” with the e-commerce concept, and “business processes” with e-business. To ensure the full understanding of the two concepts, valid definitions for *transactions* and *business processes* are given here:

- “Business process is a sequence of tasks carried out to achieve the business objectives of an organization.” (Zou et al. 2007. 837)
- Transaction’s definition: “A trade between two parties that involves at least two things of value, agreed-upon conditions, a time of agreement and a place of agreement”. (Kotler et al. 2002. 9)

E-business and e-commerce are two separate terms with different meanings, and although those are not brand new phenomena anymore, both have still recently been topical subjects in business literature as well as in other business related publications. As the subject has been studied by many, the terms “e-commerce” and “e-business” have numerous definitions. One source differentiates e-commerce and e-business in a following way:

E-commerce refers mainly to transactions (selling and buying of goods) carried out online, as e-business is used as a wider concept, referring to the way of doing business in wider scales (Jackson, Harris & Eckersley. 2003. 5).

Although there are often references to Internet when e-business is discussed, it's noticeable to realize that Internet is not the only existing channel available to conduct e-commerce or e-business operations. Although some sources are concentrating on the importance of only Internet techniques, also closed networks, such as EDI (electronic data interchange) or EFT (electronic funds transfer) systems, can be used (Jackson et al. 2003. 17). The networks are called closed networks, as the access is limited and charged. The kinds of networks are often seen as a pre-stage of e-business or as still being a part of it.

The propensity to define e-business as closely linked with exploitation of Internet technologies is confusing, as many sources (such as Hughes. 2008 and Jackson et al. 2003) do not draw lines between different online networks. Instead EDI and other similar closed networks are recognized as part of e-business and e-commerce in some sources, and this report will also treat open and closed networks as one concept, as long as those are used in a manner typical for e-business or e-commerce.

“The advantage of e-commerce to consumers is greater access to fuller information on prices of goods and services. The advantage for producers is they can directly access a greater market potential for their goods and services.” (Jackson, Harris & Eckersley. 2003) Jackson, et al. (2003) express in this quotation the very important essence of e-commerce (and e-business also): there are usually two parties gaining the benefit of the electrified processes, just as the electronic activities are often transactions between two parties.

5.1 Characters of e-business

Some experts in the field like to differentiate and categorize companies based on the level and the amount of electronic activities. As an example, Lahti & Salminen (2008. 22) divide companies into categories of having paper-free accounting, electronic-, or digital financial management, based on the state of electronic and paper involvement in their internal and external procedures. Also Jackson and Eckersley (2003) have defined three terms related to utilization of Internet technologies that a company must fulfill to fit in the concept of e-business:

- Electronic devices have to be utilized in processing and communicating of data (for example e-CRM system)
- “An increased integration of databases and hardware devices must be allowed”
- Interactive use of systems and services (for example Itella’s service to follow the transportation of your order, or participation in a conversation forum) is allowed

5.2 The essence of e-commerce

The role of transactions between two or more parties is essential when defining e-commerce. According to Dave Chaffey, e-commerce is all the electronically mediated financial and non-financial transactions “between an organization and any third party it deals with” (Chaffey. 2009). This definition with its explicit distinction of the essence of transactions verifies that also very basic contacts, which are not related to buying or selling of goods, are included in e-commerce activities. Pure sharing of information in B-to-B, B-to-C, or C-to-B sector or in any other level, when it’s handled through an online network, can be defined as an e-commerce activity.

If one thinks of all the companies whose services or products he’s using, and starts counting how many of them have a web page from where their e-mail addresses or any other contacting tool facilitated by the Internet can be found, the number will be huge. All of these companies are exploiting Internet technologies in their business operations. If you start counting the number of companies who have adopted all e-Customer Relationship Management (e-CRM), e-Financial management (e-FM), and e-Marketing as part of their standard business processes, the number will collapse.

There is no rule that e-commerce is for businesses only operating online. The beneficial way of doing e-commerce and the functions that would benefit of applying e-commerce applications, are totally dependent of many variables, such as the field, the structure and the size of the business. The truth is however, that e-commerce applications are very often simplifying business processes, and releasing valuable resources to be located elsewhere. There is no reason why SMEs shouldn't take the advantage of e-commerce as much as the bigger companies do, if they're suitable for such activity. By exploiting e-commerce tools and therefore also allocating human resources more efficiently, SME may improve its performance and competence.

Today the online shopping trend has pushed itself through and the Internet infrastructure has spread all around the globe making it easy to access the online stores. E-commerce is a lifeline for many companies, as it offers a way for small companies to go international, which might otherwise be impossible. It's assisting companies of all sizes to increase their market share.

E-business and e-commerce are two different concepts that have similar components but also differences. E-business is described to be exploiting online networks and electronic tools to rationalize and simplify internal business processes, to facilitate communication and information exchange and storage, and to increase the amount of integrated information systems and devices. When e-commerce focuses only on transaction of goods, money, and/or information through an online network, it's clear that a company conducting e-commerce might not qualify as an e-business conductor.

6 Sectors of e-Business

E-Business is built of the similar sectors as normally functioning businesses. The main features of electronic business are its capability to advantage from the networks, by using the new techniques in transactions or content, money, and information, and its ability to run automated processes. The electronic way of doing business is represented here in more detail.

6.1 Digital Marketing

Commonly used synonyms for Digital Marketing are Internet marketing, i-marketing, web marketing, online marketing, and eMarketing. “eMarketing is the process of marketing a brand using the Internet. It includes both direct response marketing and indirect marketing elements and uses a range of technologies to help connect businesses to their customers”. (Stokes. 2009)

Unquestionably the best features of e-Marketing are its ability to reach the target market without any limitations of time and place. Besides that, marketing of a brand via a channel that is popular among the business and private sectors, regardless of age or gender factors, has been rather uncommon before the era of the Internet. Through this channel the opportunities and available combinations of tools are unlimited. In fact, aiming to reach the customers is a great reason to start digital marketing, as the majority of Finns use the Internet on daily bases or close to it (see the statistics in the following sub chapter).

If the subject is considered from a small entrepreneur’s point of view, any way to differentiate your business is important. Neither additional marketing strategies nor other supporting electronic campaigns were necessary, when conducting e-commerce alone was impressing. Today, as marketing and gaining visibility in the Internet has become more challenging, the network also offers countless opportunities to reach the target audience. The channels for communication, advertising and publishing content in the net are various; few examples are web sites, portals, forums, conversation platforms, and web publications. A case study of a conversation forum will be introduced in a sub chapter later on, and the findings of the study will reveal the efficiency of the Internet and its societies.

Steve Latham (Latham. 2008), a CEO of Spur Interactive Ltd., writes in his blog that e-marketing is often connected to e-commerce activities: “1. Misperception that online marketing is only needed if you have e-commerce”. An enterprise that finds marketing essential for business success will most evidently benefit from Internet marketing as well. The target audience doesn’t necessarily have to be reached at the market place. Vast amount of other forms of marketing reaches its target somewhere else than actually at the mart.

Before making the shift to digital marketing it is viable to clear up the picture of the current marketing strategy. Moving to a new area of marketing doesn't necessarily require investing resources into development of a totally new marketing plan and strategy. The old ones can be applied to fit in the new environment as long as the environment and its characteristics and opportunities are known and recognized.

As the Internet is an extremely huge place, the importance of knowing the target group multiplies. If you know the age scale, marital status and gender of your customers, it helps you to get started with locating the target group's favorite places. A proper CRM system in planning the marketing processes is a great contributor.

6.1.1 Popularity of the Internet

A research conducted by Taloustutkimus interviewed more than 3000 Finns in March-April 2008, examining the Finnish internet behavior, and they found out that the Finns are "using bank services, reading news, using e-mail, following blogs, watching videos and searching for information to support purchasing decisions", spending on average 8 and half hours per week online (Uutiskirje: Nuoret näyttävät... 2008).

The use of the Internet has been continuously increasing the whole 21st century until the year 2009, when the usage of the Internet has faced a slight decline. However the ownerships of home computers and Internet connections have somewhat increased. (Uutiskirje: Nuoret näyttävät... 2008)

In 2009 more than 90 % of 16-74 year old Finns were using Internet weekly or more often, without any significant difference between different age groups. More than 80% of 16-54 year olds were using the Internet on a daily basis. (Tilastokeskus. 2/2009)

The majority, i.e. 91 per cent, of the Internet users were sending or receiving e-mails, while searches for product or service information were run by 86 per cent of users (Tilastokeskus. 1/2009). A huge proportion of those using the internet every day belong to the age groups that are actively involved in the employment sector and are also holding the greatest purchasing power. As much as 86% of the active users are looking for information to back up their purchasing decisions, to make comparisons or to find some new service or product supplier.

Table 3: Use of the Internet, top 16 (Tilastokeskus. 1/2009)

Use of the Internet	%
Sending or receiving e-mails	91
Bank issues	87
Searching information about products or services	86
Reading online magazines	77
Browsing travel- and accommodation services	68
Has been looking for information related to illness, nutrition, or healthiness	68
Looking for information on authorities' websites	55
Listening to Internet radio or watching Internet TV	47
Listening to or downloading music to own computer from the web	42
Reading blogs	41
Downloading official forms to the computer	38
Searching for education- or course supply	38
Using instant messages	37
Making purchases in an online store	37
Downloading programs to own computer	34
Writing messages to conversation columns or news groups	33

6.1.2 Internet vs. traditional marketing channels

A prevailing trend in the U.S.A is that marketing activities are shifting more to the Internet and at the same time decreasing the use of traditional means of marketing, such as radio advertising and print media. This is due to the fact that Americans spend more time in the Internet than on reading magazines or listening to the radio. (Holahan. Dec. 7/2006)

Based on the statistics concerning the use of the Internet in Finland, the Finnish consumers are also increasing their use of the Internet. The case study introduced later on will reveal that 21 per cent of the respondents (N=78) are going to increase Internet marketing in the next two years and reduce the amount of traditional means of marketing. 44 per cent reported that they'd increase Internet marketing without any reductions on their usage of the older channels. The interest towards Internet marketing seems to be substantial within the SMEs in Tampere Region, which have formerly received consultation related to electronic business.

6.1.3 Web sites

Web sites play an important role in marketing. Besides placing banner advertisements to other's web pages, one should keep in mind the importance of the company's own web pages. It is the second place that the potential customer wishes to see after finding a link or other reference of the existence of an interesting enterprise. It doesn't matter whether the information comes from radio, magazine, net catalog or search engine, the quickest way to attain more information is via the Internet and preferably the company's own web pages.

There are web sites of different levels, and those can be divided into three categories based on the following characteristics:

- *Stage 1 web sites (Publishing sites)* concentrate solely on publishing content. These sites don't offer any possibility for users to interact, although the content may be modern and taking advantage of modern technologies. The site may contain content in different forms, such as articles, videos and photos, but the visitor is only viewing the content without any possibility to express himself. (Hanson. 2000. 10)
- *Stage 2 web sites* include the same content as the stage 1 sites, but now visitors have a chance to approach the organization behind the sites. This interaction is still two-phase interaction: visitor sends a message or request, and the organization receives it and sends a reply back to the visitor. This exchange may as well refer to sending e-mails or making sales or purchases online, or requesting information through applications (route map services etc.). (Hanson. 2000. 11)
- *Stage 3 web sites (Personalization)* are very seldom used among small enterprises. These sites don't just enable interaction and react on visitor's requests, but are predicting customer needs and wants and making suggestions. Stage 3 Web pages are built based on user's individual needs and obviously need a registration procedure to identify the users and to collect relevant information. (Hanson. 2000. 14)

Several sources are assuring that the users of web pages or other digital content are crying for interactivity (Hanson. 2000. 41). The situation hasn't changed for a decade as the same trend that was predominant in 2000 could be seen in 2009 as well. This refers to that the user satisfaction would be higher the higher the stage of the web page is according to scale presented above.

6.1.4 The business cycle and marketing

A business magazine Advertising Age introduced two marketing experts in October 2009. When the recession and its consequences to the marketing strategies that the experts were using were discussed, the interviewees both stated that the recession had made them re-evaluate the marketing channels they're using.

One of them, chief marketing officer (CMO) for sports drink company Owater, said that they were "thinking about more creative, less expensive ways to get the word out from a marketing point of view" (Zmuda. 2009. vol. 80. 36: 44). The other interviewee, senior VP for Fender Musical Instruments Corp., stated that the company was counting on creating buzz and saw the importance in partnerships and forming alliances with their own supply chain members (Bush. 2009. Advertising Age 2009, Vol. 80).

In Fender Musical Instruments Corp. the ultimate goal was to reach the end consumers to collect data and finally to generate buzz. Co-operation with some of their supply chain members that operate in the customer interface enabled successful execution of this strategy (Bush. 2009. Advertising Age 2009, Vol. 80). Owater, the sport drink company, also mentioned their presence in stores and interaction with the end customers as one major part of their marketing and buzz creation process (Zmuda. 2009. vol. 80. 36: 44).

The two marketing experts are responsible for marketing of very different kinds of products: one company has very flexible definition of their target group, as they're targeting everyone athletically minded, while the other's products are seen as luxury products with narrower market. Common line with the two separately interviewed experts was that the business cycle has an impact on how they're handling marketing, and most importantly they both have revised the marketing channels through which they are delivering the marketing message.

In short, the recession is impelling companies to think about new options. The economic situation has made enterprises all around the globe to tighten up their money belts and one area easily affected by this is marketing. As the few examples show, it's possible to keep delivering the same message you've already been using, but the delivery channels can be adjusted to the new budget and/or other limitations.

The two example companies were keen on having face-to-face interaction with their end consumers, which is pretty common in retail market. A natural environment to reach the end consumers is in the store from where the item is purchased. But as can be seen in the chapter 6.1.1 *Popularity of the Internet*, a vast majority of 16-54 year old Finns are also hanging in the Internet daily or almost daily. The statistics showed also that 86 per cent of the users were using the Internet to search information on products or services.

6.1.5 Internet networks as channels for e-marketing

As the Internet is open for anyone, it includes also closed networks. Large and medium sized organizations often supply intra- and extranets to ease up information flow and to limit the access to the data to a certain group of employees or partners. Intranet is often offering information essential for the employees (like the minutes of meetings, list of co-workers, internal news) and extranet contains information targeted for the partners from the supply- or retail chain.

Intranet is focusing completely on sharing the information and facilitating conversation inside the organization, but extranet has an organization's external parties as the target audience, and therefore some marketing is delivered through the network (Hanson. 2000. 86). As small enterprises rarely have extra- or intranet, they use only the public internet to deliver all e-marketing content. Even the organizations with intra-, extra- and public internet are sometimes using the public internet solely to publish marketing related content (Hanson. 2000. 86). This refers to that the channel for e-marketing mainly stays the same regardless of the size of the enterprise or organization.

There is a difference between the nature of marketing, depending on whether it's business-to-business (B-to-B) or business-to-customer (B-to-C) marketing. Organizations with extranets are delivering B-to-B marketing through the extranet (Hanson. 2000. 88) but leave the B-to-C marketing on the public internet, when the organizations with no extranets are focusing all of their e-marketing resources on the public internet.

6.1.6 Internet societies: Survey

Maybe the best known social media in Finland are YouTube, Facebook, and MySpace. Common feature for all social media channels is that they allow users to publish content in some form.

To find out how the word-of-mouth is really used in the Internet's social media and if it has an effect on the purchasing decisions of the end consumers, a small survey was conducted in one local conversation forum, "Nokian mammat" (<http://www.foorum.info/nokianmammat/>). The community is mainly targeted for mothers living in Nokia, and although it welcomes also grandparents, fathers and women expecting their first ones, the majority of members are women with children.

In December 2009, when the data was collected, the forum had 548 registered members and there had been 35 091 messages published. The survey gained 57 responses (10.4 % of members). The e-form 3 application was used to gather data, which was then analyzed with Tixel.

The members of the discussion board were asked to define the reasons why they use the forum (Question1: Choose the most important reasons for you to use the forum). Unanimously the most important reason for respondents to be a member of the forum was to get different kinds of advices and ideas from the others (79%). Acquiring information took the first place also when the respondents were asked to express freely how they'd describe the forum. The most used terms were referring to being informed about the city services and activities, topical news and being advised by the others on various subjects. Being supported by a peer group (72%) and having interesting conversations (63%) were also considered as important motives (see the figure 1).

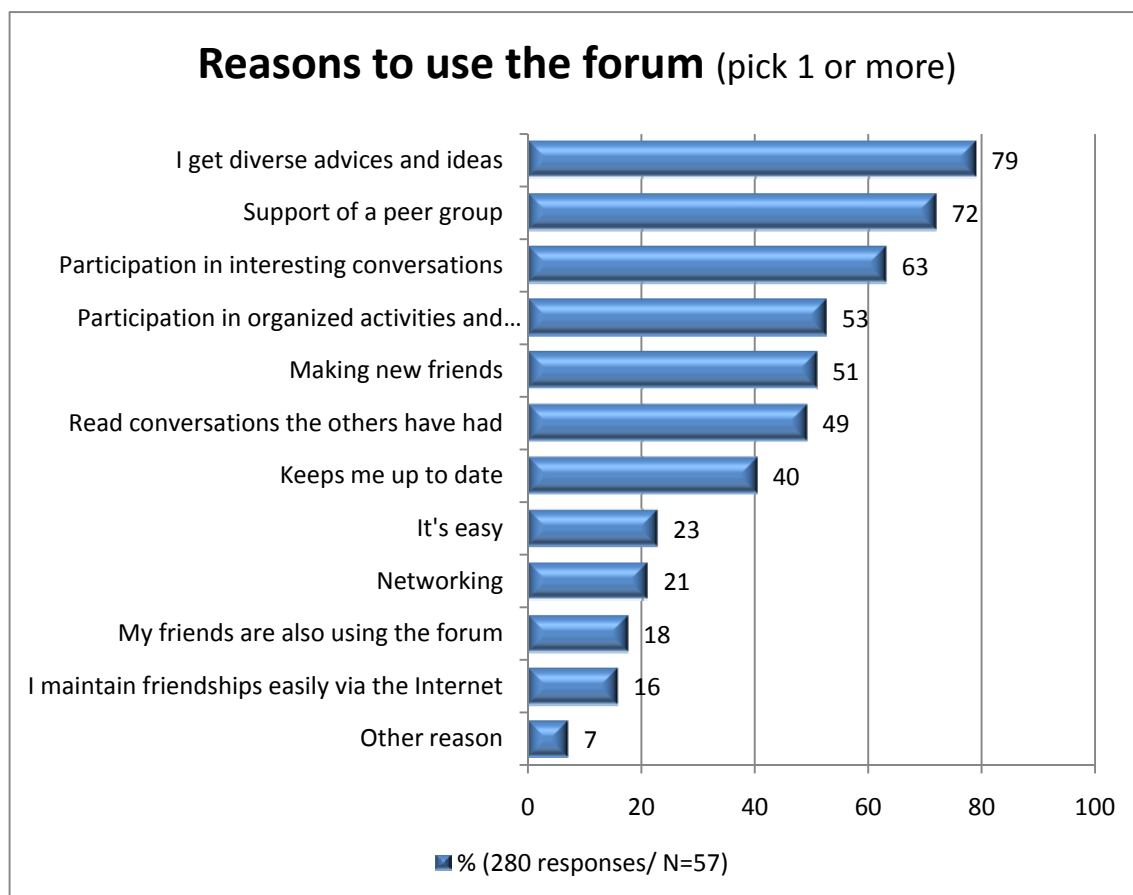


Figure 1: Reasons to use the forum (mr)

The active nature of the forum was attracting some of the members and the statistics prove the claim to be true, as 79 per cent of the respondents were visiting the platform daily or almost daily (Question 2: How often do you visit the forum?). Additionally, five respondents expressed their tendency to visit the forum multiple times per day, which increases the amount of daily or almost daily visitors to 81 per cent.

100 per cent of the respondents had read other people's experiences with products or services while visiting the platform (Question 3: While visiting the forum, have you read other users' opinions about products or services they've used?). As the figure 2 shows, the influence of the others' opinions is great on the readers' purchasing decisions. On a scale from 1 to 5, when 1 is *not at all* and 5 is *very much*, 63% of the respondents estimated the influence of others on their own purchasing decisions to be in level 4 or 5. One third of the respondents (32%) estimated the influence to be in level 3.

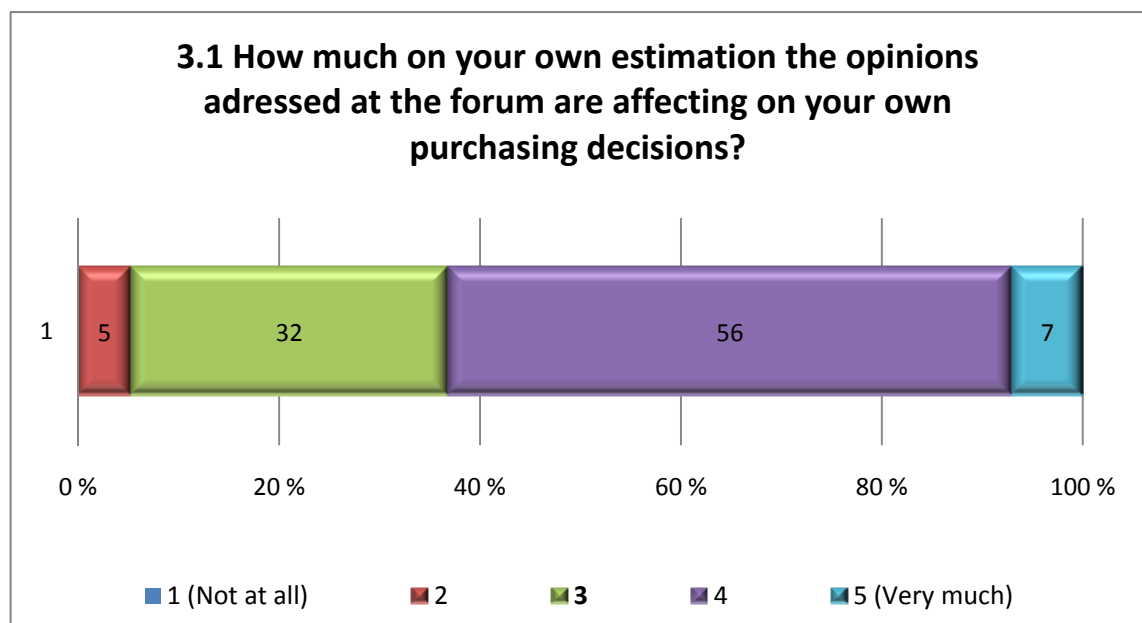


Figure 2: Word-of-mouth influencing purchasing decisions (N=57)

When asked, whether the respondents had published their own positive or negative opinions at the forum, 82 per cent replied they'd been praising a product or service (see the figure 3). Negative messages had been posted by 42 per cent of the final sample, which is only half of those who posted messages positive in tone. 18 per cent of the final sample hadn't shared their own experiences at all. This leads to a conclusion that two positive experiences are published at the forum for every negative toned post, and nearly 100 per cent of the users are reading these posts.

Besides this conversation forum, the most popular daily online activity that the respondents reported was using Facebook (77% out of 57 respondents). As the forum's daily user proportion also yielded to 81 per cent of the respondents, it's clear that the majority of social media users are using both, the forum and Facebook, on a daily basis. Only 37 per cent were purchasing cloths and 37 per cent purchasing something else online, and the both activities were conducted on monthly bases.

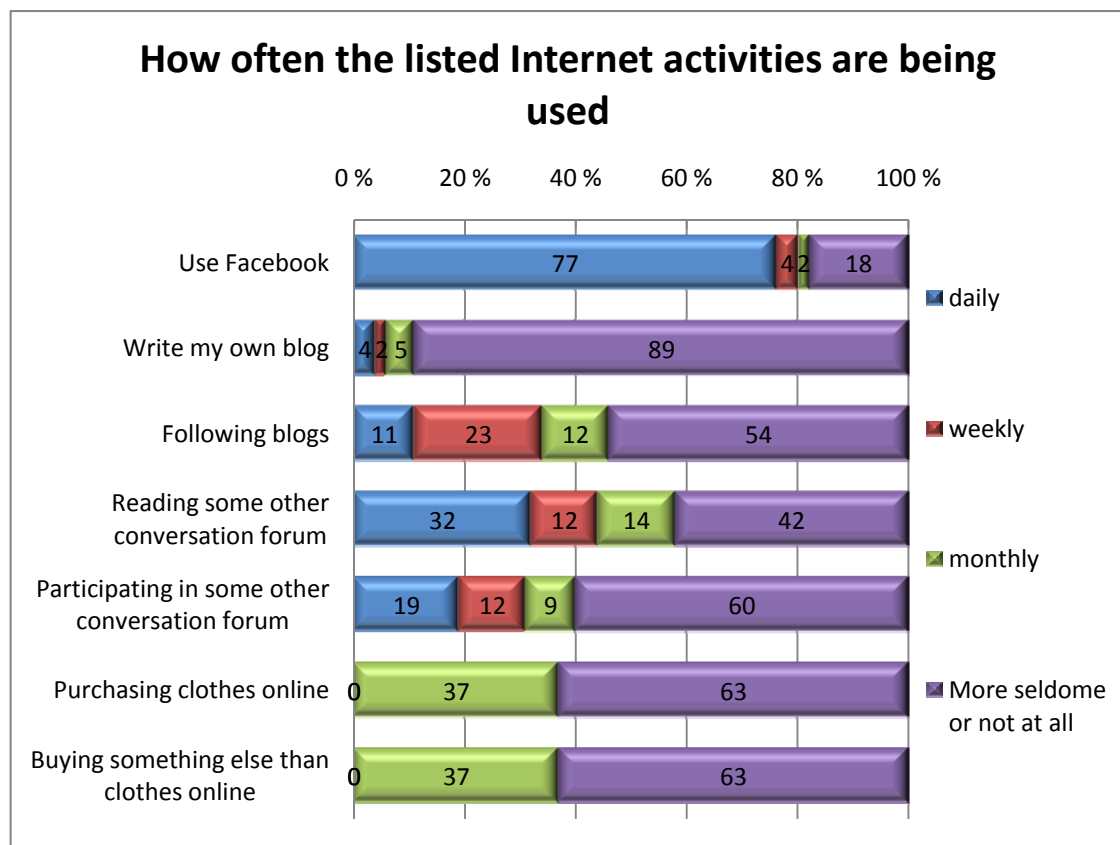


Figure 3: How often the Internet activities are being used (N=57)

As 80% or more of 16-54 year olds in Finland were using the Internet on a daily basis (Tilastokeskus. 2/2009) and 77% of the Nokian mammat-sample is using Facebook on a daily basis, it is quite obvious where this particular group could be reached, if necessary.

An interesting question is now, what makes the conversation forum so popular among its users, that they keep coming back. Features, how the members described the forum, included warm atmosphere, manner of not insulting the others, tolerance towards different opinions, and easiness to jump in and take part in conversations. Being informed and advised was another feature that many respondents mentioned, but the atmosphere and tolerate attitude seemed to be the two key elements that the users saw as being the key differentiators.

Appreciation of good manners reminds about the back side of social media. A common problem is that the lack of real identity encourages people to publish insulting or somehow else inappropriate content and poisoning others' experience. There are tools to guide such a behavior and most conversation platforms have their own supervisors and reporting systems in case of offensive behavior.

The Nokian mammat discussion forum is a model example of well operating Internet societies. The users are committed to use the service. The majority of the respondents visit the forum daily or almost daily, and 75 per cent of the total sample believes that their use of the forum will not decrease in the next three years. Facebook is the only Internet activity of the given options (see the figure 3) that can compete with the daily usage rate of the forum. The other activities were used less than monthly or not at all by more than 50 per cent (N=57), except the option of reading another conversation forum, which was used monthly or more often by 58 per cent of the respondents.

In short, a successful discussion board has a good atmosphere that makes self expression easy for the members. The users should have something in common, the more the better as it helps the users to identify with other members. Requiring registration helps to keep up a high standard of postings. The association behind the discussion board in the case of Nokian mammat doesn't concentrate all its activities online, but arranges also the live group meetings, as well as do the members by themselves. Because of the live meetings the people behind their pseudonyms can be connected to an actual person. This is most probably one factor that has built up the users' trust on the posts displayed at the forum and on the persons behind the posts. A well working Internet society for marketing purposes should have a good level of mutual trust, as it increases the trustworthiness of the conversations and multiplies the impact of the publications on the consumers.

6.1.7 Social media and buzz

Building up customers' trust and having their commitment to company is challenging. In any field, where competition is intense, social media might be the rescuing lifeline that keeps the company competitive.

O'Leery and Sheehan (2008. 3) point out that sharing experiences tightens up the teller's commitment to the company, whose product or service was on the spotlight (assuming that the story was positive in tone). This means that encouraging customers to share their experiences will have dual benefit for enterprises: those who hear the message will become potential new customers, and most importantly; those who spread the message are breeding their own commitment.

O'Leery and Sheehan believe that more committed customers are also spending more money in comparison with the size of a household (2008. 3), which increases the customer value. Interactivity on the web page, links to forums with product related conversations, or verbal encouragement to get the customers start a discussion online is all worthwhile. Internet has splendid possibilities for creating word-of-mouth or buzz, as both sharing and searching information is so convenient.

If the theory of O'Leery and Sheehan is valid, the committed customers are more valuable for enterprises and the level of commitment can be tighten by encouraging the customers to share their experiences. The dual benefit of sharing is achieved when the readers or listeners can identify themselves with the situation. Favourable circumstances can make the sharing of product experiences easier. A factor that an entrepreneur can influence and in that way support the emergent of buzz is to offer (create or find one) a tolerant environment, where self expression is easy and the other members are receptive.

The Internet consists of countless networks that are connected with each other in many levels. Members of the networks may belong to many communities at the same time, and the information and content is crossing the boundaries easily. If a publication is interesting enough, the buzz easily starts rolling on.

6.1.8 Targeting

The biggest challenge of the successful Internet marketing seems to be reaching the target audience. As the Internet is a huge place, the potential customers need to be first of all recognized. After knowing who the customers are the different types of data can be collected in numerous ways. e-CRM software can help on receiving, saving, and processing the data.

Another approach would be to attract the potential customers to come where you want them to be. An interactive web site and an independent discussion board are examples of the platforms where social media could be used to favor a business. The CRM approach will still favor an enterprise even if the chosen strategy would be to manipulate the target group to spread the word, get involved in interactive activities or just to see the advertisement.

6.2 Digital financial management

Financial management is used to “monitor an organization’s economical actions in means to be able to report about the actions to its interest groups”. Based on the interest groups the financial management can be divided into two: internal and external accounting. Internal accounting is tracking down the actions that need to be reported to the management and external accounting focuses on offering information to parties that are outside the internal decision making circle, such as tax authorities, employees, suppliers etc. (Lahti & Salminen. 2008. 14)

Financial management is an information system that consists of numerous components connected to each other. These components are the data, equipment, programs, entering the data and the output; - in short the components cover each influencer participating in the processes of gathering, dealing with, archiving and reporting the data (Lahti & Salminen. 2008. 14). In electronic financial management “a company is empowering its financial functions by taking advantage of IT, applications, the Internet, integration, self service and various electronic services” (Lahti & Salminen 2008. 21).

The term digitalism¹ refers to “handling, transforming, archiving and presenting electronic data” (Lahti & Salminen. 2008. 17). Lahti and Salminen (2008. 19) define the digital financial management as “automating and handling in a digital form all information channels and processes belonging to financial management”. The most descriptive word to describe the digital financial management according to the two authors is “automatic”, as the data is processed and the results available as automatically as possible (2008. 19).

¹ *digitaalisuus* in Finnish

In the digital stage all the financial processes are renewed and improved as one giant entity, removable phases are deleted and all that's possible automated (2008. 21). The level of digitalization of financial management processes defines whether the organization can be defined as having digital –, or electronic financial management.

In short, a company might conduct e-business by sending sales- and purchase invoices in an electronic form and using electronic account statements, and based on these actions the company can be defined as having electronic financial management. However, this financial management can only be referred as being *digital* if all the related functions are carried out in an electronic form. This means that a single invoice sent for the organization in a paper format could hold the organization back in the pre-stage of having *digital* financial management. (Lahti & Salminen. 2008. 19, 21, 22)

During the phone interviews in the data collection process for the survey (with the target group of eYrityspalvelu and Internet marketing-course participants) one respondent stated that his company had bought an application to create and send electronic invoices and afterwards they realized that very few of their partners and customers had the needed programs and equipments to deal with e-invoices. This is a good example of how the business environment, in which the organization is operating in, is affecting the ability to reach the definition of digital or electronic financial management.

It's noticeable that the digital financial management requires adaptation of e-business and especially exploitation of digital techniques in the field of financial management, - not only inside the organization but in the interest groups as well. The partners, owners, customers, suppliers and many other parties outside the organization have their own information systems, which need to be synchronized with the organization's systems to increase the level of automated processes.

In the end of the 1990's and in the beginning of 21st century paper-free accounting was spreading, and companies were archiving the files required by the external authorities in an electronic form. Paper-free accounting is still not a synonym for digital accounting. If the data has at any point been in the paper format and afterwards transformed into the digital, the process can't be defined as digital financial management. The development of financial management is described in the figure 4 on the next page. (Lahti & Salminen. 2008. 22)

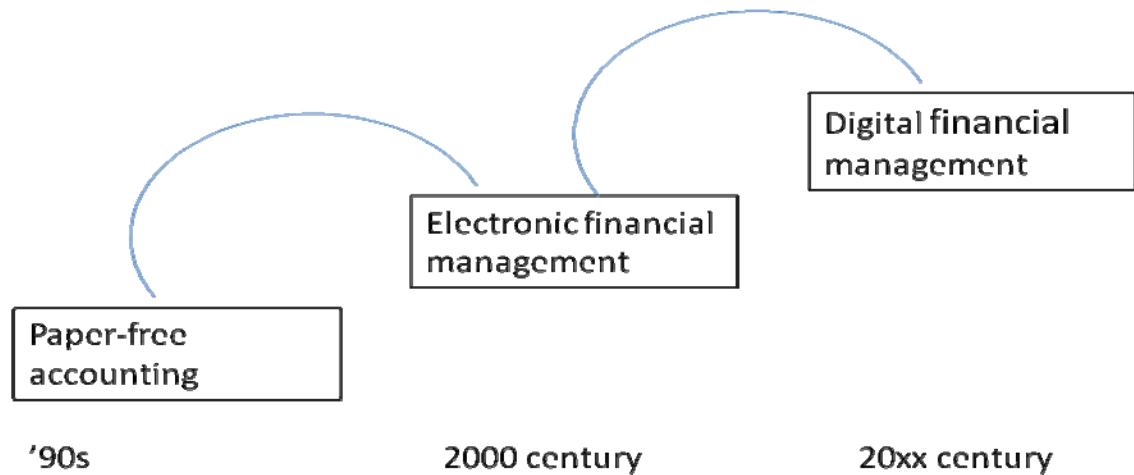


Figure 4: The development of electronic financial management in Finland (Lahti & Salminen. 2008. 22. Picture 3: *Sähköisen taloushallinnon kehitys Suomessa*)

The benefits of using the electronic information systems are mainly due to the automation: collecting, handling and archiving the data are all faster than in the paper era. Information is available in multiple sources and faster than earlier, the same data doesn't have to be entered to the system more than once and vain mid-phases are being handled automatically.

In 2008 Lahti and Salminen described Finland as a forerunner in the field of electronic financial management. Business to business e-invoicing had a strong position in 2008, and business to customer e-invoicing was still in its baby shoes (2008. 23). Most of the 500 largest organizations in Finland have adopted some application to handle and send forward the purchasing invoices (2008. 25). The larger Finnish companies are also in other digital financial processes more developed than the SMEs (2008. 25).

Digital financial management offers many advantages for companies but seems to have hardly any disadvantages. Lahti and Salminen (2008. 27) raise efficiency, speed, reduced storage and archiving space, flexibility, reduced amount of mistakes and ecologically as some advantages. Not to mention that automation of financial management is causing savings in expenditures in such factors as need for employees, storage rental, and mail expenditures. It's possible to raise the efficiency of financial management even by 50 per cent by acquiring digital policy. Typically organizations increase their efficiency by 30-50 per cent. (Lahti & Salminen. 2008. 27)

Small enterprises are often outsourcing their financial accounting, or using a software that's has been bought as a standard package solution. A standard accounting program for small enterprises includes normally "customer register and sales invoicing, accounts payable, head book-keeping, and basic reporting", and normally these features are enough to cover the needs of entrepreneurs. Often enterprises are using only part of the functions included in their application packages, since the packages are un-adjustable. For the bank connections small enterprises are normally using a separate program or an internet based service offered by a bank. (Lahti & Salminen. 2008. 32)

6.3 SCM (Supply Chain Management)

The supply chain management (hence SCM) is defined by Bowersox et al. (2002. 4) as consisting of "firms collaborating to leverage strategic positioning and to improve operating efficiency". This definition is quite simple and describing. Companies belonging to the same chain can have in their usage a "highly efficient and effective network of business linkages" (Bowersox et al. 2002. 5).

Supply Chain Management is an opportunity for several operators in a single supply chain to get organized and to enhance their work processes and competitiveness through exploiting the new ICT and Internet technologies. The SCM is offering the same benefit as the use of any electronic assisting information system handled in this report: strengthening work processes by preventing duplicate work (Bowersox et al. 2002. 5).

SCM is needed in organizations that are producing goods or services for the end consumers or otherwise related with the manufacturing or delivery process. Integrated supply chain allows partners to share information in real time as the supply chain covers every participator in the value chain from the organization that receives an order, through every middle step in between delivering the product or service, until the moment the end customer actually receives the product.

In an example case an organization receives an order, checks the availability and orders the needed raw materials, produces and hands the goods over to be carried away by a distributor, who then delivers the goods to another party of the chain or directly to the end consumers. What links these activities together is the integrated system, through which the information moves back and forth between the parties in the value chain. The key point is that by sharing information, databases and information systems the members of a supply chain achieve a cutting edge benefit compared to the competing chains. Time, money and human resources can be saved in practice, as the work phases become simplified and some processes automated.

In SCM it's not only about the exchange of information, as with the e-commerce, but also product, service, financial, and knowledge flows exist (Bowersox et al. 2002. 6). The flows between two parties in a chain are normally moving to both ends. As the flow of services or products is normally moving to one direction, towards the end consumer, the other flows moving in diverse direction could be for example reclamations, recycling, and recalls (Bowersox et al. 2002. 174).

Adequate implementation is as important in this case as always when it comes to utilizing software. The supply chain need to be managed starting from the materials, through all the middle phases and ending to the end consumer (Bowersox et al. 2002. 25). If some of the processes are left without attention or the application is too challenging for the user to utilize it efficiently, problems arise.

6.4 Integrated systems and ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning)

The amount of ICT applications and systems used by a single organization can be high and therefore it's important that the cooperation between the applications is as fluent as possible. Different systems need to be integrated so that the processes between the applications won't be too complicated and create unnecessary work phases.

As an example, if an enterprise has online sales activities, the activities will cause also some actions in the financial management, and it would be beneficial to integrate the systems of the two different operations. Now that online sales have become more popular, also integrations made between these two systems have increased lately (Lahti & Salminen. 2008. 39), which refers to that the entrepreneurs are acknowledging the importance of having well performing integrated systems now more than before. Organizations may integrate all of their operations or then be more selective, and ease the cooperation between few operations only.

ERP systems are simplifying business processes by reducing vain actions and automating processes. In action, ERP enables the sharing of information across different departments and organizational borders by integrating separate information systems. "Most typically ERP systems cover at least the modules of sales, production, project management, HRM, logistics and material management, and financial management". As the ERP systems are operating in a variety of modules, allowing exchange of information faster and easier than before, they're great boosters of operational efficiency. (Lahti & Salminen. 2008. 36)

The industry in which the organization is operating regulates the type of the most suitable ERP system, as the market includes now products with industry featured operations. A special focus may be for example in such sectors as sales and CRM, financial management, logistics, production, or HRM. During the recent years the variety of available ERP versions has expanded so that special solutions, developed to respond better on the needs of the small enterprises, are now available. (Lahti & Salminen. 2008. 36, 37)

6.5 eCRM

“e-CRM can then be defined as the use of internet technologies to facilitate the management of customer relationships” (Chaston and Mangles, 2003). The application is enabling the fast sharing of information between the sales department and the operational management. “CRM provides sales representatives and customers with current information gained through the ERP system regarding sales history, shipment history, order status, promotional summary, and shipment information “ (Bowersox et al. 2002. 197).

CRM is offering bunch of beneficial information for companies. The information that CRM offers with the ERP system can be combined with other influencers, such as the information gathered from product development, pricing, and promotion. This combination of different information enables predicting customer orders. (Bowersox et al. 2002. 198)

6.6 The usability of applications

As web solutions are normally bought or leased as packages of services, the part of the product that the purchasing party deals with is mainly the user interface (the visual part of the product for end-consumers). Entrepreneurs are often “novice users”, the term that Ying Zou et al. use in their report, for what comes to different e-commerce applications. User interfaces (UI) of applications might be too complicated for an unaccustomed user (Ying Zou et al. 2007). Sceptic and negative attitudes towards e-business are in some cases consequence of unfamiliarity with applications and the Internet technology.

Best way to get familiar with the program and most importantly to exploit it in a way that the maximum benefit is delivered to the user, is to invest on consultancy and education. By educating oneself and the staff, the usability of applications will rise to a higher level. Also the choice of the right application, responding to the user’s needs and expectations, is a factor in which a skillful consultant can assist.

The applications used by the consumers, when it's an e-commerce application, or by the staff inside an enterprise, should be out of good quality to ensure a pleasant experience and smooth use of the application. The usability may be the critical factor especially for users unfamiliar with ICT applications. Some applications lack on usability, since they've been created mostly from the perspective of IT personnel rather than by considering the end user's point of view. According to Zou et al. this raises at least two problems:

1. For one, if the User Interface (UI) may be implemented so that it does not follow the regular order of the business process i.e. it's not possible to proceed by following the natural order of the smaller tasks carried out as part of a particular business process, when a certain user interface is used.
2. Secondly, the location of different components of the UI may be far from obvious, and this may cause difficulties for users to follow and locate the essential components.
(Zou et al. 2007 pp.837)

Careful selection of the applications will ease up exploiting the best of it. The five attributes that define the usability of an application are:

1. learn ability, which measures the ease of learning the functionality of an application
2. low error rate, which measures the number of mistakes that users make while using the application
3. memorability, which measures the ease of remembering the functionality of the application,
4. efficiency, which measures the ease of use and the level of productivity that the users of the application can attain, and
5. user satisfaction, which measures the enjoyment of the users who are using the application. “

(Zou et al. 2007 pp.838)

7 The survey

The research was commissioned by the Federation of Finnish Enterprises in Tampere Region. The aim of the survey is to screen out the current level of utilizing electronic tools in business operations in SME sector in Tampere Region, with a special focus on enterprises that have formerly been active with the subject and used consultation or educational services. Also the need for development and willingness to make investments were examined.

The goal of the research is to offer information of the current and future states of SMEs in Tampere Region that have already been actively involved with one or more fields of e-business. The results offer besides the information about the current stage, an insight of small entrepreneurs' perceptions towards electronic business operations. Short term investment intentions and topical targets for development can also be used to predict the level of short term adaptation of e-tools.

Similar researches have been carried out annually by eYrityspalvelu-project to find out the current stage of electronic business among their customer enterprises. The questionnaire used in this research is based on the forms used in previous years. The results of the previous years 2007 and 2008 are also partly presented with the new results.

7.1 Introduction to the survey

The sample consisted of SMEs that had participated in eYrityspalvelu-project in April 2006-April 2008 and of 100 participants of an Internet marketing-course organized by the Federation of Finnish enterprises in Tampere Region in October 2009. Common feature between the two groups and the reason why the both were qualified to be included in the same sample is that all the members have received some form of consultation on the subject examined in the report and the organizing party has been in both cases the client federation.

The invitation to the survey was sent by e-mail to the eYrityspalvelu customers in September 2009 and to the Internet marketing participants in November 2009. The eYrityspalvelu customers who did not react to the first message were approached for the second time with a reminder e-mail and some of them by telephone in October-November 2009.

226 former eYrityspalvelu customers had a valid e-mail address and 198 received the message. The number of those who received the e-mail in the Internet marketing group is unknown. The final sample is 80 respondents of which 20 per cent belong to the Internet marketing group. The final sample represents 26.8 per cent of those 298 enterprises who received the invitation, assuming that the 100 participants in the Internet-Marketing group all received the e-mail.

The questionnaire was modified slightly shortly after its release, and therefore the 17 first respondents used a different version than the remaining 63 respondents. Due to this inconvenience few questions were represented only to 63 respondents. The questions with smaller sample will be clearly pointed out in the following analyses section. Also the Internet marketing-course participants (20 respondents) answered an additional question about their visions of beneficial marketing channels. The acquired data has been processed with Tixel statistics program.

The sample consisted of enterprises, which have already expressed their interest towards electronic business activities and therefore does not represent the whole SME sector in Tampere Region. The sample can be seen as representative to local SMEs, who have acquired some sort of consultation on the topic.

The Federation of Finnish Enterprises in Tampere Region has in 2009 launched a project called Pirkanmaan Buusti offering consultation for SMEs in the fields of boosting sales, change of the ownership, e-business, and increasing market share. The content of the survey is therefore extended from the previous years: Besides e-business the survey was planned to conduct assessment of the situation in the three other sections of the new project as well. As the electronic tools are applicable to nearly any business activity in any field, and as the enterprises are usually operating as a tight package of various simultaneous activities connected to each other, it's important to define enterprise's current stage as widely as possible to be able to draw reasonable conclusions.

The survey was divided into the following categories:

1. Assessment of development targets
2. Adoption of electronic business activities
3. The forms of e-commerce in use
4. Investment plans
5. Growth objectives
6. Office software and devices
7. Financial management
8. CRM
9. SCM, ERP
10. Resource management
11. Internet Marketing

7.2 Results

The results presented here are not in a corresponding order with the questionnaire, but the questions have been given ordinal numbers to ease up the reviewing of the results.

The sample represents the Tampere Region enterprises as follows:

- Tampere/ 24 respondents – 30%
- Tampere sub region: 4 cities represented/ 17 respondents – 21%
- Southwest Tampere Region: 2 cities/ 7 respondents – 8,7%
- Upper Tampere Region: 7 cities represented/ 10 respondents – 12,5%
- Southern Tampere Region: 3 cities represented/ 4 respondents – 5%
- Northwest Tampere Region: 1 city represented/ 1 respondent – 1,2%

The dispersion among different sub-regions is similar with the situation of the earlier researches. Dispersion of the amount of employees per enterprise is also very similar to the previous years' statistics. 41 per cent of the respondents are the only person in the company, 44 per cent employ 2-9 employees (including the owner), and 15 per cent represent enterprises with 10-19 employees.

7.2.1 Assessment of development targets and interest towards growth

Question 1.a: Need for development: Choose the business areas which you find as topical or about to become topical targets for development in your enterprise.

The current state of several business sectors was screened out in a section of Assessment of development targets. The respondents were very affirmative towards development, as 85 per cent out of 80 respondents expressed that they have one or more business areas needing development (see the figure 5). The questionnaire offered eight alternative targets for development and altogether the 68 enterprises ticked these options 200 times. 51 respondents reported to have more than one target for development. In addition to the given development targets (see the figure 5) the respondents mentioned *quality system*, *extension of the enterprise*, and *hardware and IT-skills*.

Marketing (50%), sales and customer service (49%), or products and production (47%) was a target for development in half or nearly half of the enterprises that expressed having a need for development. 40 per cent of the enterprises needing development (corresponds with 33 per cent out of the final sample) replied that their IT-skills needed improvement. The other four areas listed in the following chart needed development in 22-34 per cent of enterprises needing development. Electronic commerce was seen as least interesting target for development, as only 22 per cent saw that as topical target.

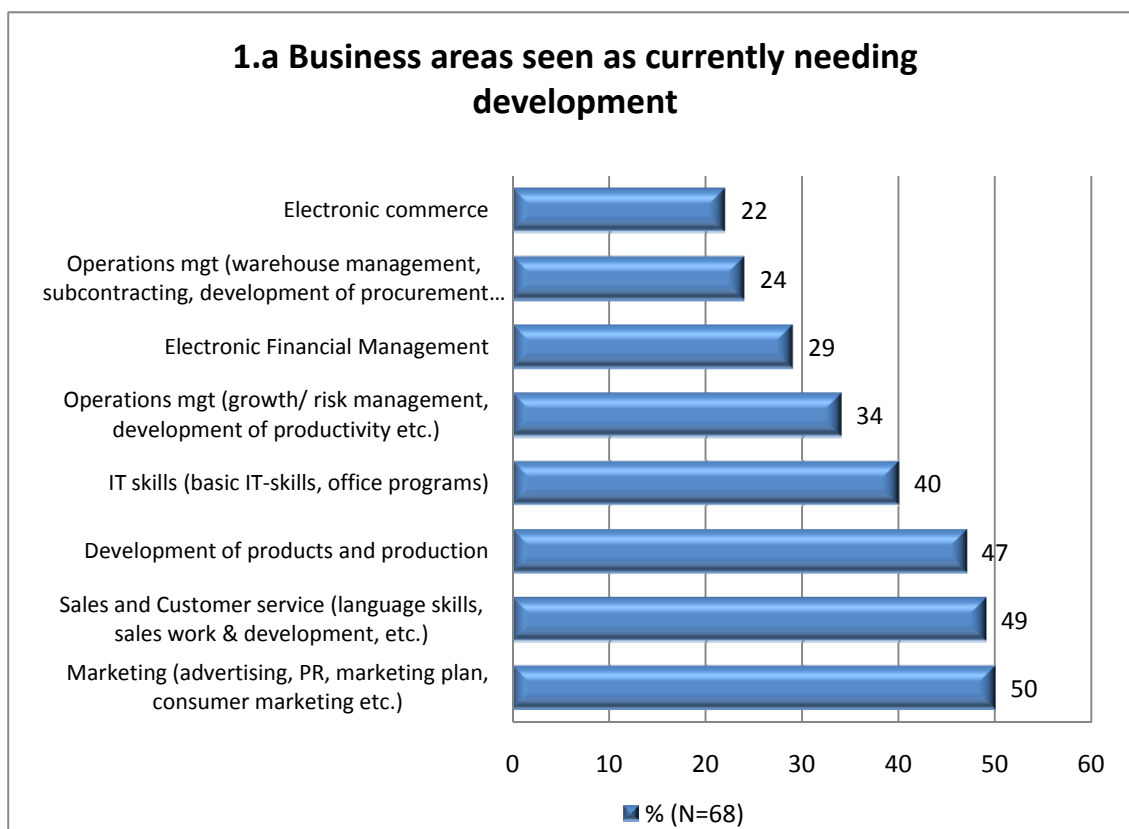


Figure 5: Business areas seen as currently needing development, (% , N=68)

The table 4 indicates how the size of an enterprise affects the selection of development targets. The enterprises with less 10 employees are more focusing on developing the marketing and customer service sectors than the enterprises with more employees. The product and production development is seen as important among all size classes used, but still relatively a little less important among the bigger enterprises.

The attention was paid more on the state of electronic Financial Management the bigger the company is. The SMEs with 10-19 employees considered the development of IT-skills as more topical than the smaller SMEs. This is likely related to the more advanced electronic processes run by the larger SMEs.

Table 4: Cross tabulation of the development targets and the size of an enterprise measured by the number of employees

Row variable: The business sectors in which development is topical now or in the near future				
Column variable: the number of employees				
%	1 em- ployee	2-9 em- ployees	10-19 em- ployees	Total:
IT-sills (basic IT-skills, office programs)	33	36	50	37
Marketing (advertising, PR, consumer marketing, etc.)	54	48	20	46
Sales and Customer service (language skills, sales work, development of sales, etc.)	50	48	30	46
Development of products or production	50	52	40	49
Electronic Financial management	25	32	40	31
Operation's Management (growth or risk management, development of productivity etc.)	21	48	30	34
Operation's Management (warehouse mgt, sub-contracting, development of procurement, etc.)	33	12	30	24
E-commerce	33	16	20	24
Total:	300	292	260	290
N	24	25	10	59

Question 1.b: Need for development: Is the change of the ownership current in your company (if yes, specify)?

The results suggest that the entrepreneurs are committed to their businesses, as only 10 enterprises (12.5 per cent of the whole sample) reported that change of the ownership was topical. The majority, i.e. 72 per cent, of the respondents were positive with increasing their enterprise's market share. 7 respondents were confronting an acquisition or sales of an enterprise and only 3 were planning to have a controlled change of generation.

Question 5: Are you willing to increase your company's market share in the near future?

Over 70 per cent of the respondents had no problem with growing their market share (see the figure 6). In exact figures this represents 57 enterprises, of which 74 per cent were interested in growing their market share strictly in domestic markets (see the figure 7). 19 per cent were interested in both domestic and international markets. Only 5 per cent of the total 57 enterprises were interested in growing the market share solely outside their domestic market. The total proportion of those who'd like to increase their market share in domestic market was 93 per cent, when the growth in international markets was in interest of 24 per cent.

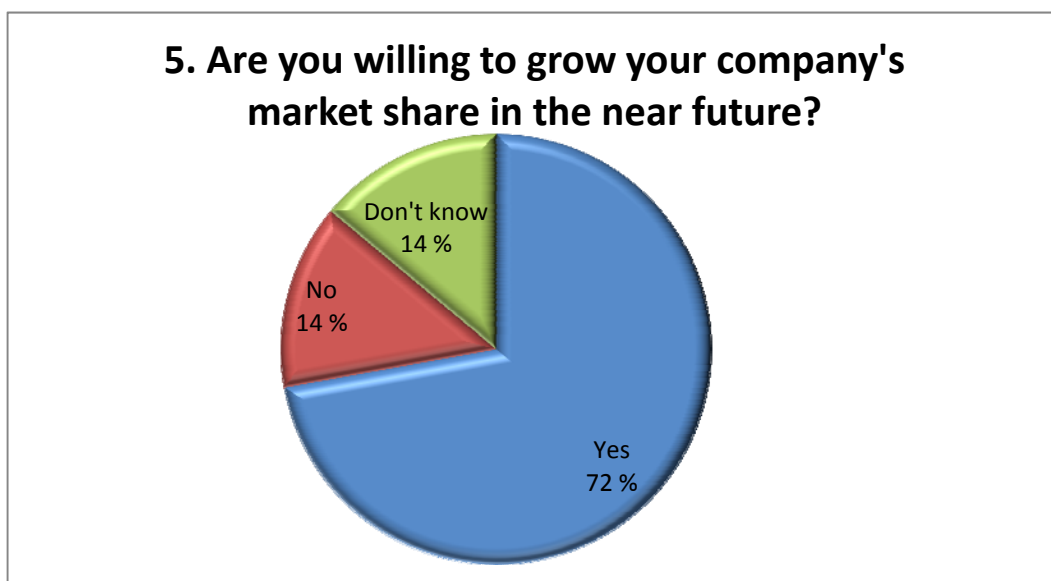


Figure 6: Willingness to grow company's market share in the near future (N=79)

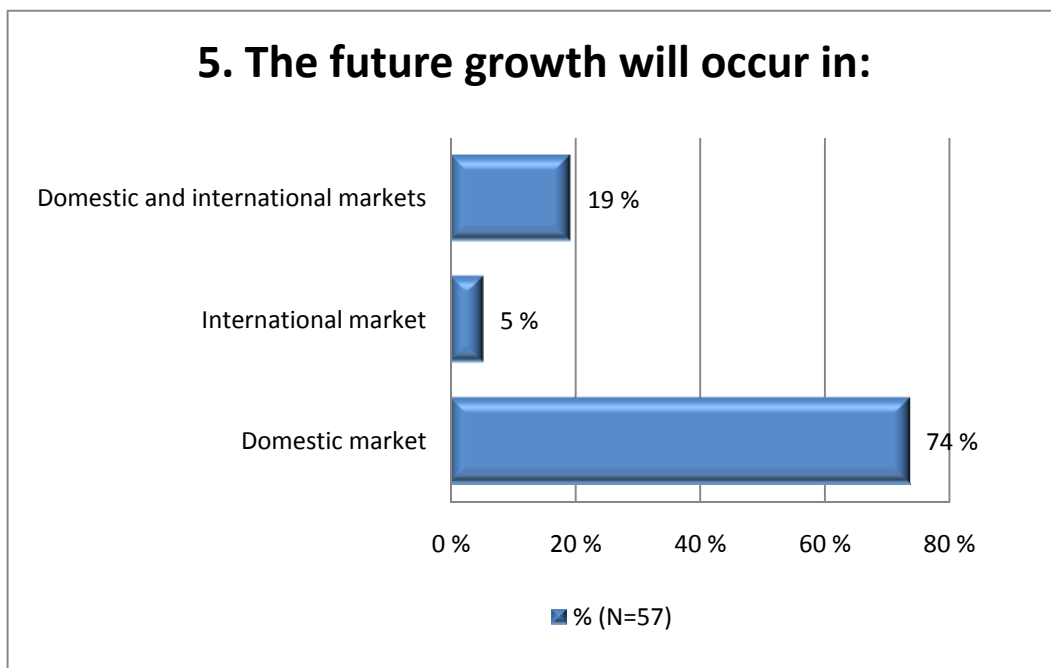


Figure 7: The future growth will occur in

Facilitating the growth only by extending the customer base or boosting sales was seen as likely in 60 per cent of the growth oriented enterprises (N=57), as the figure 8 indicates. Only 4 per cent expected the growth to be driven by an extension of a product group or the field of business alone, and as many as 35 per cent were expecting to exploit the both alternatives: increasing customer base and/or sales, and extending the range of products and/or the field of business.

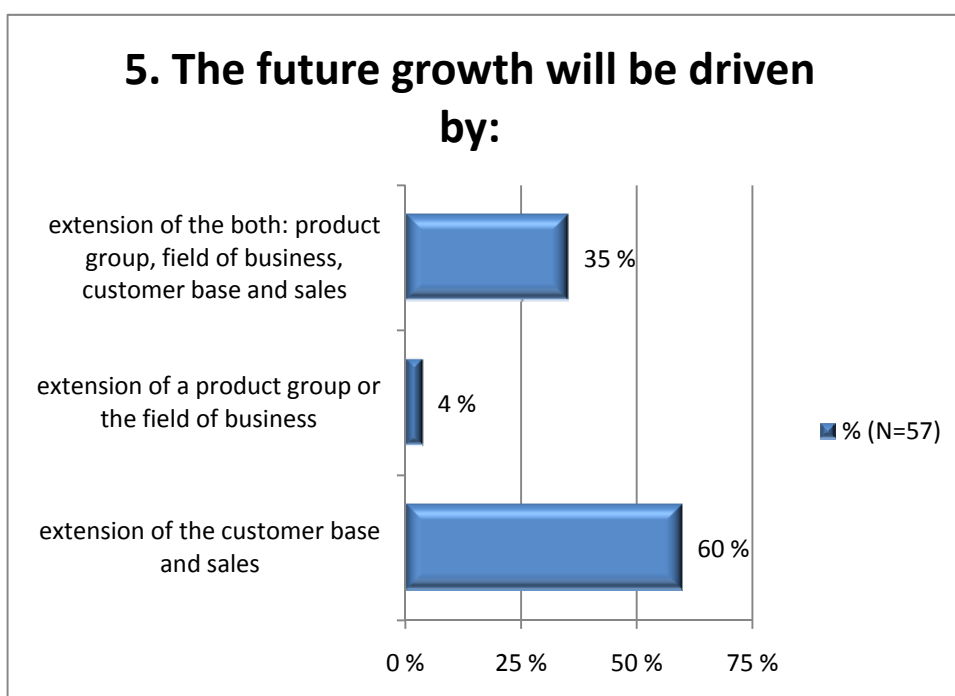


Figure 8: The future market growth drivers

7.2.2 Adoption of electronic business activities

Question 2: Give ordinal numbers to the factors of e-business, based on the order of implementation (1=the first implemented, 2= the second implemented, and so on).

The respondents were asked to put the following electronic tools into a chronological order based on the time of implementation: Web site, e-Marketing campaign, e-CRM, and e-Financial Management. Of the four given options a web page was the most commonly in use among the respondents, as 86 per cent of the final sample had implemented it. Also an e-Financial Management program was utilized by more than half of the final sample (80).

A common feature between the web page and e-Financial Management program implementations is that over half of the users had implemented the tool as the first one. Of the four given options these two are the first objects where the digitalization of business processes often starts from. The total number of enterprises with an e-Financial Management program implemented was 45, when the third popular option, e-Marketing campaign, had been implemented by 35 entrepreneurs (44% of the total 80). Only one fifth of the final sample had implemented an e-CRM program. (figure 9)

The two least popular options were implemented as first ones hardly ever. The trend seems to be that e-marketing campaigns and e-CRM programs are used by SMEs that already have an e-Financial Management program or a web site in use. In general the users of the two least popular options have already been engaged with some form of electronic procedures before deciding to start using an e-CRM program or an e-marketing campaign.

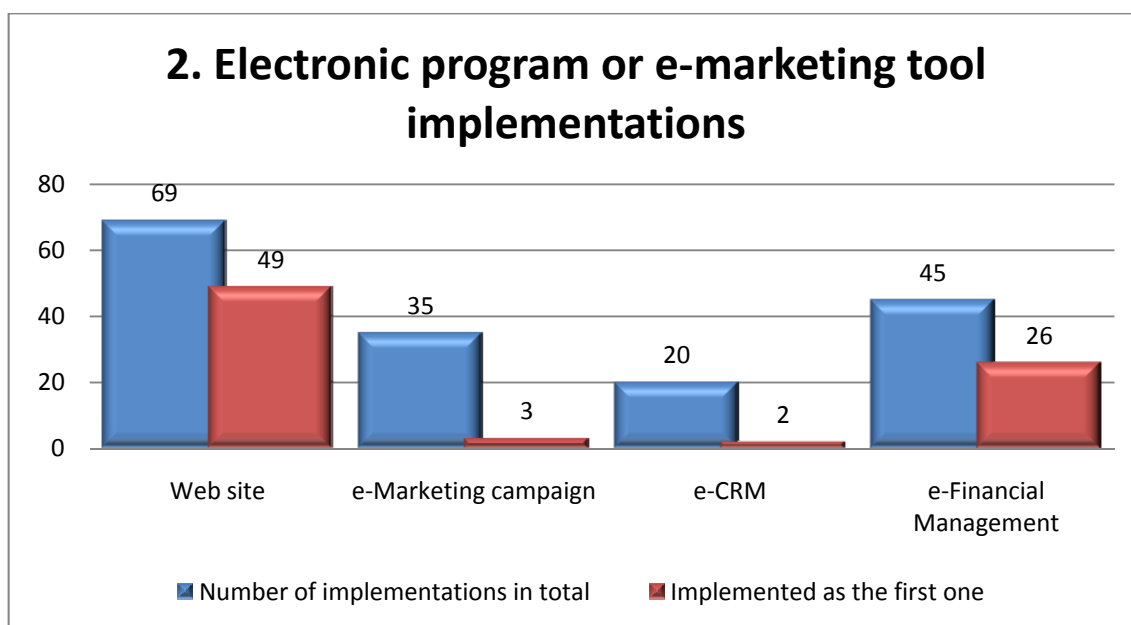


Figure 9: Number of implementations

Question 3: The forms of electronic commerce in use. The enterprise is currently:

The question number 3 concerning the electronic tools used to deliver and receive information was represented only to 63 respondents in the final sample (answered by 60 respondents), as the question was added shortly after launching the questionnaire. Based on the responses electronic involvement in the processes of exchanging information is in a high level within the sample.

The majority of the respondents exploited the electronic channels in all factors mentioned in the question three (to provide information over their products or services, receiving electronic payments from their customers, paying electronically, and receiving or sending offers electronically). However, electronic channels were more often used to deliver or receive pure information than payment related information. In 87 per cent of the cases offers were delivered or received through electronic channels and even in 92 per cent information about products or services was offered in an electronic form. This indicates that the majority of the respondents is delivering sales and marketing supporting information to their customers in an electronic form. (figure 10)

Using electronic channels in means to make payments or receive those was in a lower level than the use to deliver pure information, but nevertheless as large proportion as 75 per cent were making payments electronically and fairly over half or the respondents (62 per cent) were receiving electronic payments themselves.

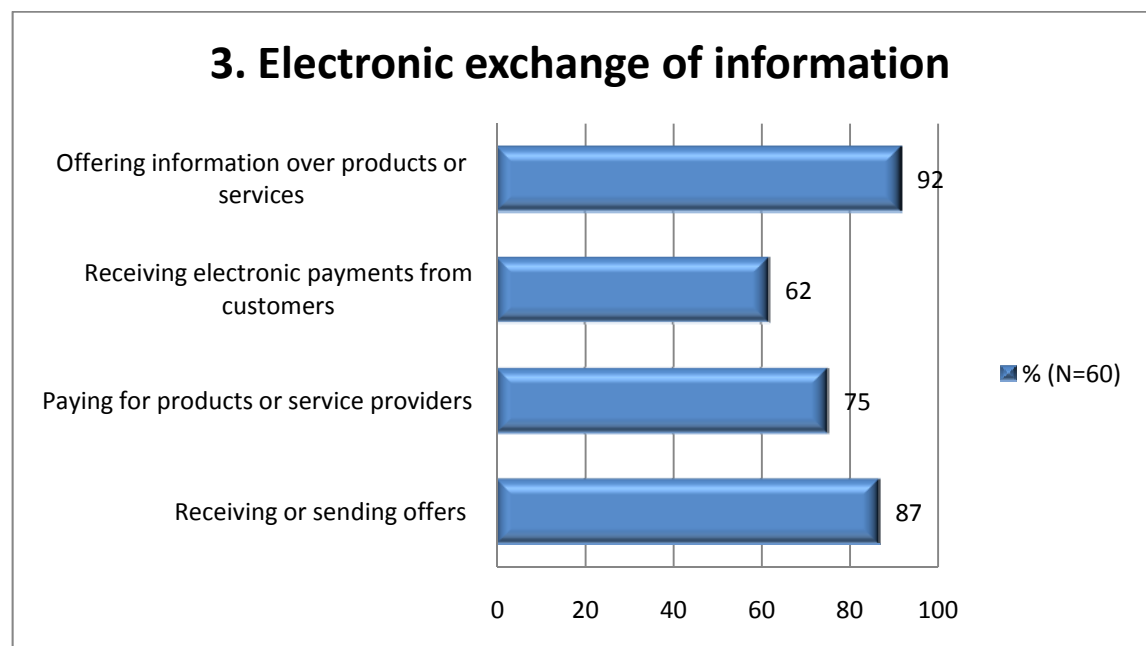


Figure 10: Electronic exchange of information (mr, 189 responses/ N=60)

7.2.3 Planned investments

Question 4: Investments: How much your company is willing to invest in IT and e-Business within the following two years? (Hardware, Software, ASP, Support, Training/ Education)

The SMEs were asked to evaluate their future investments within the next two years. The amount of the investments and the target were categorized as the chart below indicates. Only 9 enterprises expressed that they were not going to do any size of investments on any object and 7 hadn't yet decided on any investments.

Hardware garnered all together 49 investment intentions of different sizes. If the size of the investments is ignored, the top three targets were: hardware (49), training and education (46), and purchasing software (40). Half of the sample or more were willing to invest in these targets in the near future.

The most popular size class of the investments was understandably the smallest one: some hundreds of Euros. In the bigger classes hardware was the favorite target for investments, as 34 per cent were planning on investing some thousands in it within the next two years. Only three per cent was planning on investing tens of thousands. The only investment targets in this class were hardware and software. (figure 11)

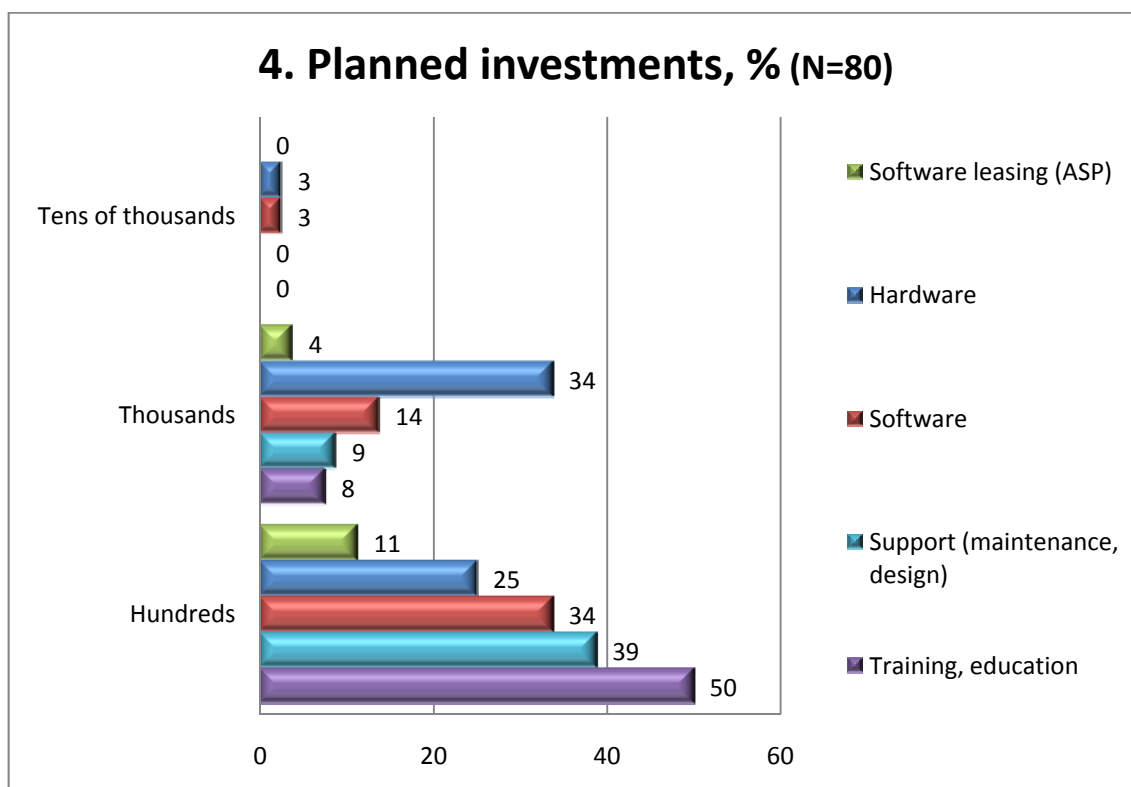


Figure 11: The planned investments (€), % (N=80)

The most investments the small entrepreneurs estimated to take place within the time line of the next two years were in the category of hundreds of Euros. In the category of thousand Euros or more the most popular investment target was hardware (34%), and responsively in the category of hundreds of Euros training and education was most popular target (50%). In general the both *education and training* and *hardware* were the most popular objects to invest in, as regardless of the size classes nearly 60 per cent of the respondents would invest in those. (figure 11)

When the two variables, the amount and target, are both taken into consideration in categorizing investment intentions, the most popular investment was small (hundreds) and the target was training and education. 50 per cent of the respondents were planning the kind of investment. (figure 11)

Question 4.b: Investments on software

34 per cent of the respondents were willing to invest some hundreds of Euros on purchasing software and a corresponding proportion of respondents didn't plan any investments at the time. 14 per cent were planning on investing 1000 € or more on purchasing software, when the responsive figure has been around 24 per cent in the previous studies. The amount of big investment intentions on product acquisition has slightly decreased. (figure 12)

As comparison, in two previous years the proportion of those, planning investments of 1-1000 € on program acquisition, has been about 50 per cent. The amount of smaller investments has clearly decreased since 2008. The amount of bigger investments has decreased only slightly. A remarkable change has happened in the group of not investing, as the number had been even the two previous years, and has now doubled since 2008. Also the amount of those who hadn't yet decided almost doubled since 2008.

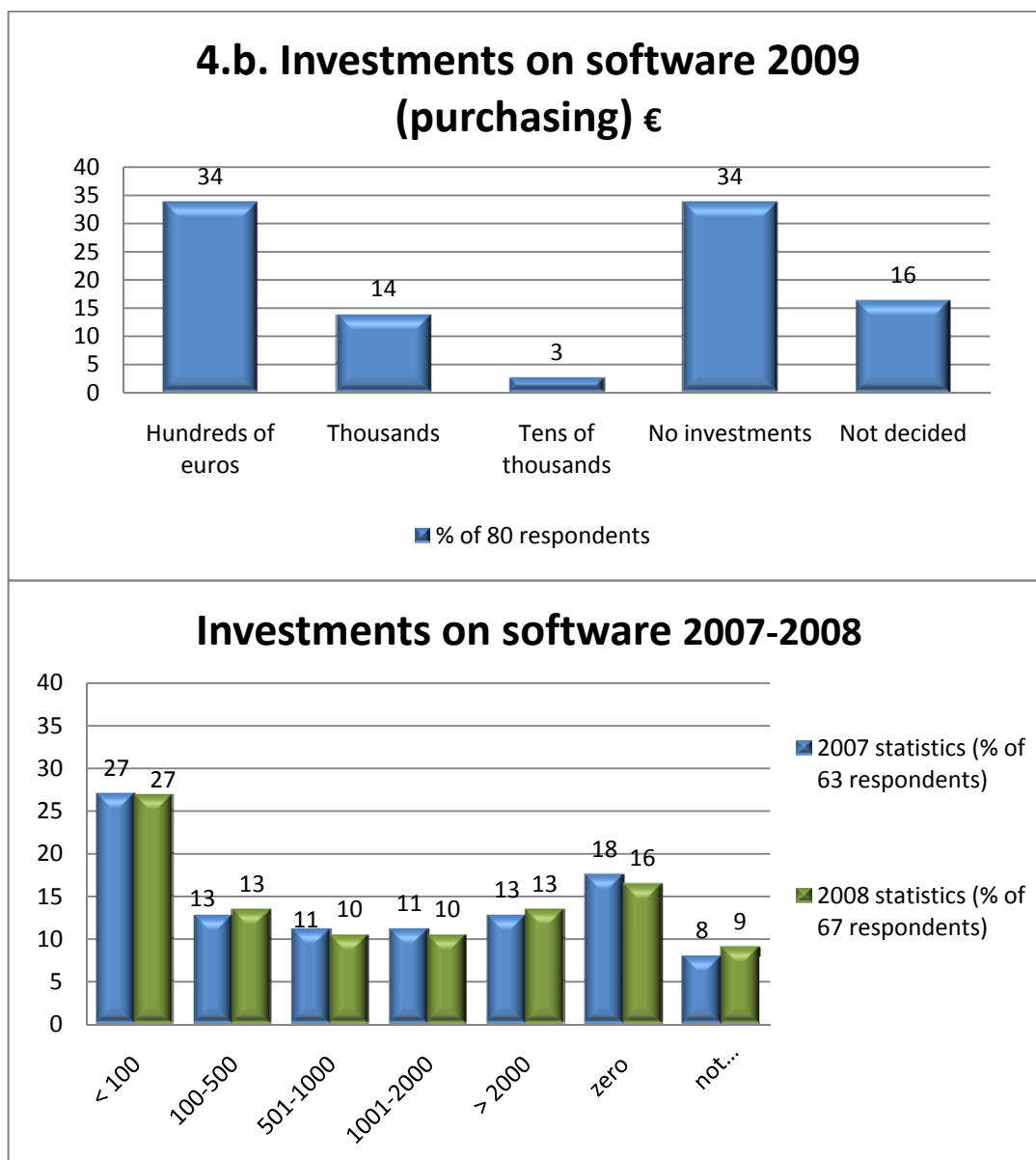


Figure 12: Investments on purchasing software, comparison to 2007 and 2008

Question 4.c: ASP

There is no point of comparison in previous year's studies for what comes to investments on application service providers (ASP). Majority of respondents were not willing to invest on it (65%) or hadn't decided yet (20%) (see the figure 13). It seems that this option is rather unknown or unpopular for some other reason. After viewing all the results of the survey, a conclusion can be made that the SMEs like to keep procedures as simple as possible, which may be also a part reason why this option is unpopular among this group. Purchasing full rights and an actual ownership of a product may seem like a clearer option for a part of the SMEs.

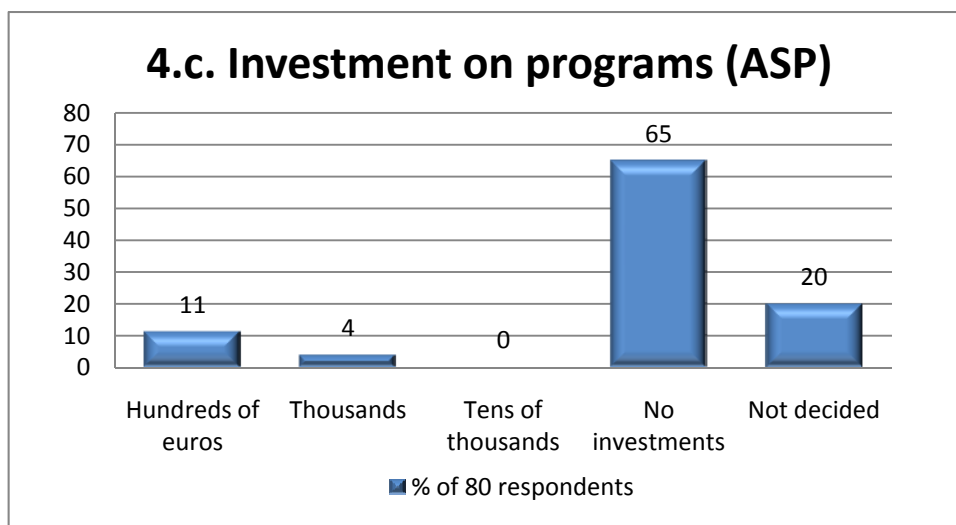


Figure 13: Investment on Programs (ASP)

Question 4.a: Hardware

The amount of those planning on investments up to 1000 € has in 2007 and 2008 been around 50 per cent of respondents. In 2009 only 25 per cent were planning to execute similar investments. Although the amount of small investments had declined to half from the previous years' intentions, the amount of larger scale investments hasn't faced any significant change. 37 per cent of the respondents had investments of thousands Euros in their mind in 2009, as the proportion of those planning investments of 1001 € or more was circa 35 per cent in both 2007 and 2008.

An interesting point in the statistics presented in the figure 14 is that the amount of enterprises not investing on hardware has more than doubled in one year. Also the number of those who hadn't decided had almost tripled.

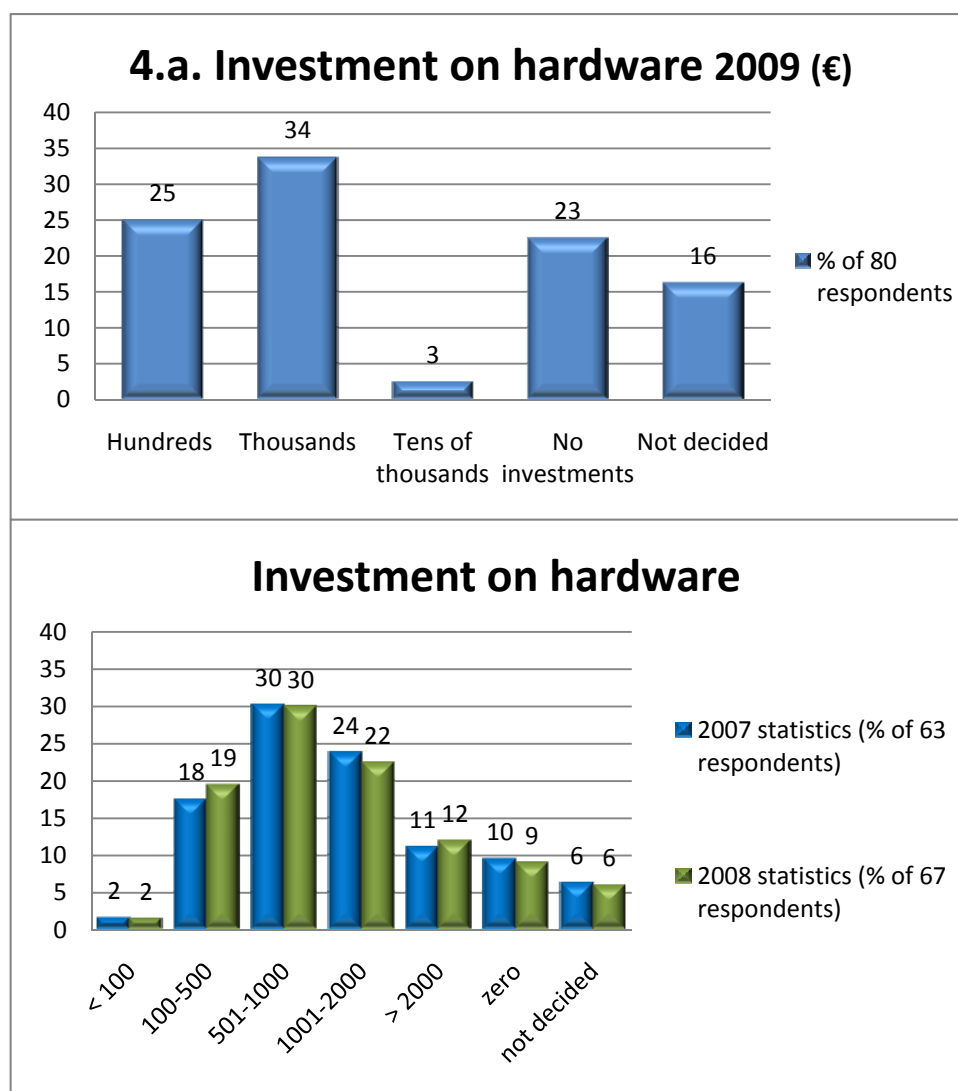


Figure 14: Investments on hardware, comparison to 2007 and 2008

Question 4.e & 4.d: Support, and Training/ Education

Planned investments on support and training/education are mainly measured in hundreds. The same trend has been dominant in recent years as well. 39 per cent were planning small investments on support, when almost as many (35%) were not intending to invest on it (see the figure 15). Half of the respondents were about to invest on training and education. The former studies didn't differentiate consultation, education, and maintenance services from each other. So when measured as one category, 75-76 per cent of respondents were willing to invest 1000 € or less on these objects in 2007 and 2008.

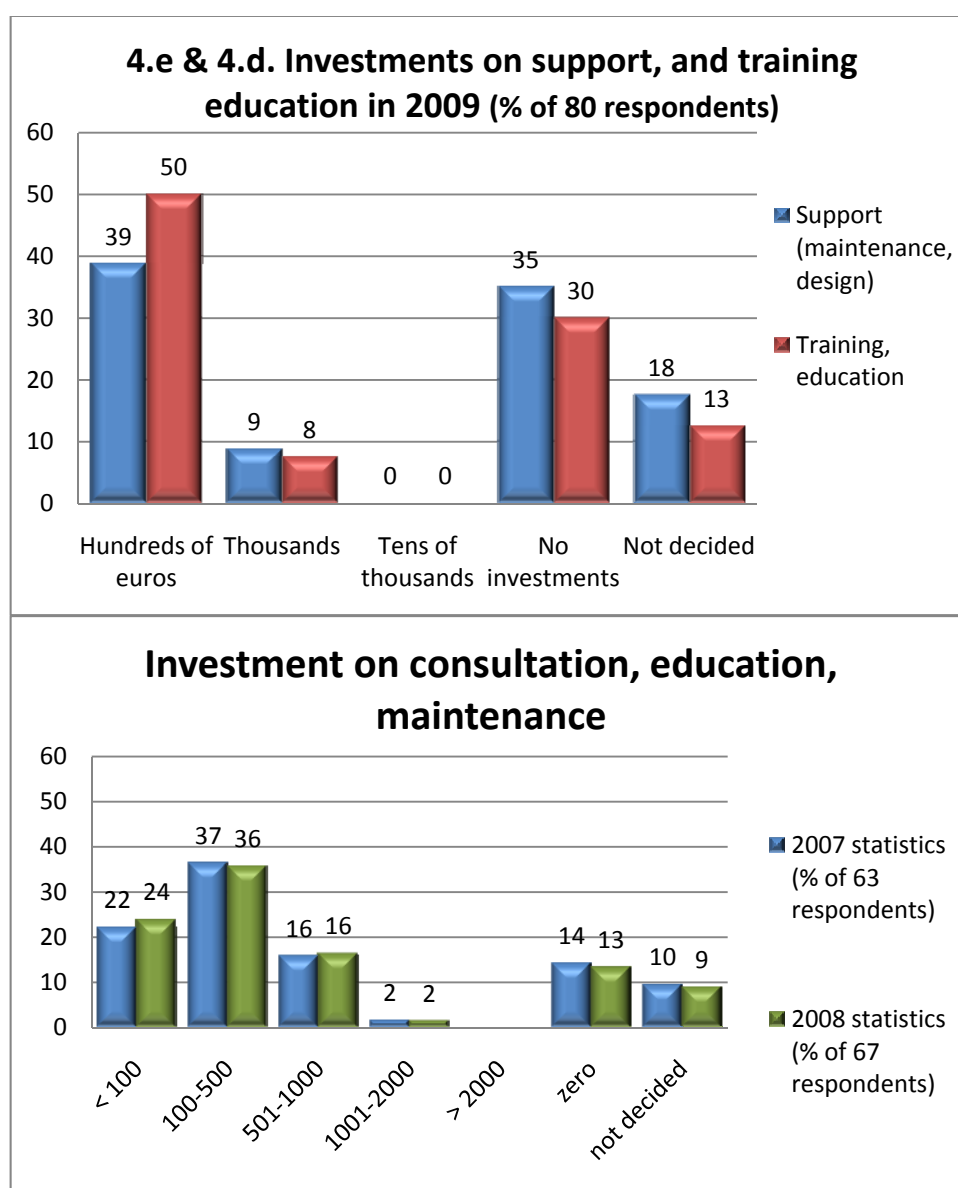


Figure 15: Investments on support, education and training (comparison with 2007 and 2008 statistics)

No investments

Some heavy growth has occurred in the segment of enterprises not investing on support services or training and education. Milder growth since the last year can be seen in the number of those who hadn't yet decided.

The respondents were most reluctant on investing in application service providers (ASP), as the figure 16 below shows. 52 enterprises, which are corresponding up to 65 per cent of the respondents, were planning on no investments on ASP. The rest of the mentioned investment possibilities were not in mind of 22-35 per cent of the responding enterprises.

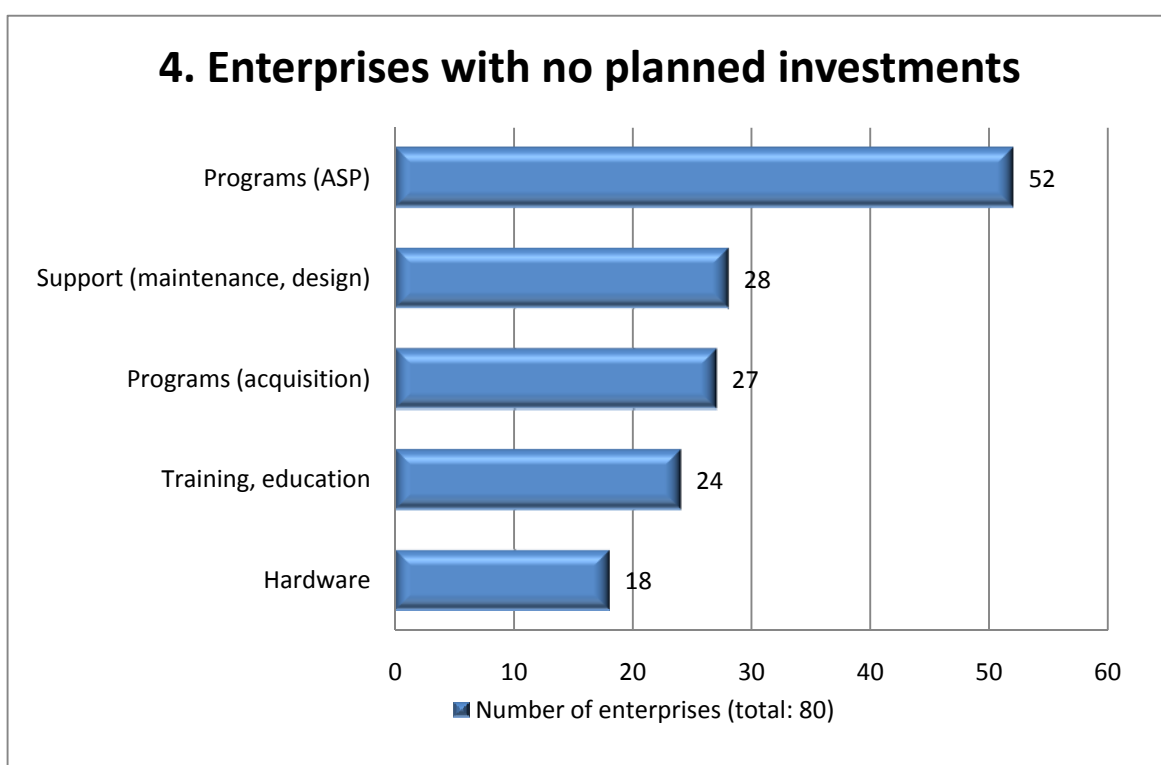


Figure 16: Number of companies with no planned investments on specific sectors

7.2.4 Office software and devices

Question 6: The office environment: Choose from the four column variables the best fitting option towards each factor (e-commerce/ portals, official services, software leasing, the basic office applications)

Office environment-section studies the functionality of several information systems related to the office environment. The respondents were allowed to choose one option for each variable describing the state of the current information system. The respondents were most pleased with the functionality of office tools' information systems (see the figure 17). 83 per cent expressed that they were happy with their office tools, when a little less (59 per cent) were happily using electronic official services. Office software and devices appeared to be the most often used in businesses, as only one respondent out of 80 responded "doesn't concern the enterprise at the moment". The number for electronic official services (the number of not concerned with) was 13.

Software leasing and e-commerce were less used in companies, as in average 37 per cent of small enterprises were not related with the concepts. Responsively the amount of happy users of these concepts was lower than with office tools and electronic official services. (figure 17)

None of the respondents are willing to implement a new ASP information systems and 19 per cent saw a need for developing the system. The former section of investment intentions declares that only 11 enterprises were willing to invest in ASP. Based on the statistics a conclusion can be drawn, that the development of ASP adoption will be slow within the few next years.

Hardly any of the respondents were willing to implement new information system. Interest towards developing the existing information systems was in a bit higher level, as from 12 to 14 enterprises towards each object saw the need for development.

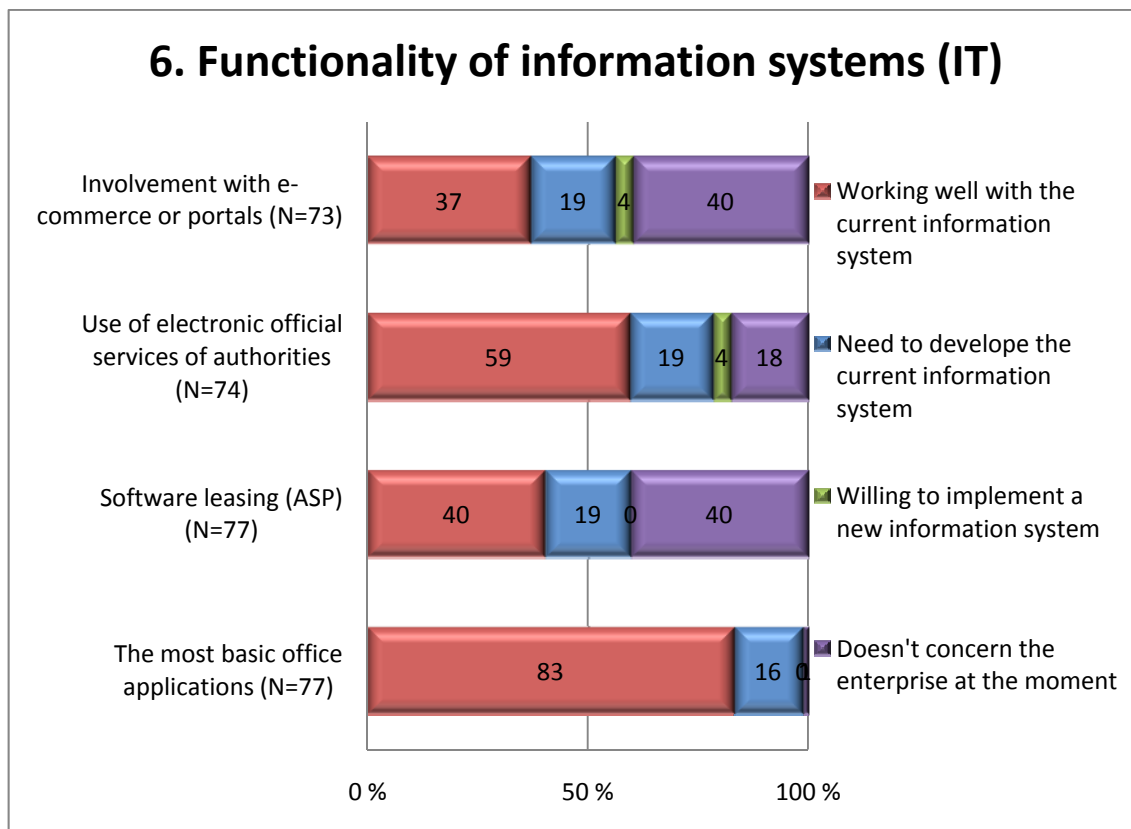


Figure 17: Functionality of information systems (related to IT)

7.2.5 Financial management

Question 7.a: Financial Management: Choose the channels which are used or planned to be used in near future to send an electronic invoice. (Directly from financial management program, From a financial management program through an external e-invoice service, Using an invoicing form that customer offers in their website, Using an e-form at e-invoice service provider's website, and the service provider forwards the e-invoice)

This question was not presented for the first 17 respondents, as the questionnaire was modified shortly after launching. The sample size of this question is therefore 63. The results of a survey conducted by the Federation of Finnish Enterprises in 2008 are presented in this section as a comparison. Based on the results of both of the studies, all the other models of electronic invoicing have increased their popularity, except "other forms of e-invoicing", which was used only by two respondents. The other means were: via bank, and by fax.

The most common electronic form of invoicing in 2009 was a pdf-invoice sent as an e-mail attachment, as 56 per cent of the 63 respondents were using this form. In 2008 the corresponding figure representing SMEs all across the country was 46 per cent (Suominen. 2008). Within those who were using a Financial Management program invoicing the customers directly with no middle parties involved was more common (40% of 63) option than circulating the invoice through a third party to the customer (22% of 63). (figure 18)

The proportion of sending an electronic invoice directly to the customer was now 11 per cent higher than in 2008, when it was 29 per cent. There has been slight increase also in the proportion of SMEs using an e-invoicing process that involves a third party since the year 2008. (Suominen. 2008)

An alternative channel of e-invoicing is an online form. Some companies, especially those who wish to be invoiced in electronic form, are offering a possibility to fill in the invoice details at their web site. There are also intermediaries facilitating the e-invoicing procedure of their customers by offering an e-form at their web site, in which the invoice data can be fed. The intermediaries allow the invoicing parties to fill in the data at their web site, and proceed to send the invoice in electronic form to the receiving party. The both options of e-form invoicing were used by only very few respondents. Surprisingly the e-form facilitated by a service provider was used more often than an e-form of the invoiced party, but as the number of the users is so low any valid conclusions can't be drawn.

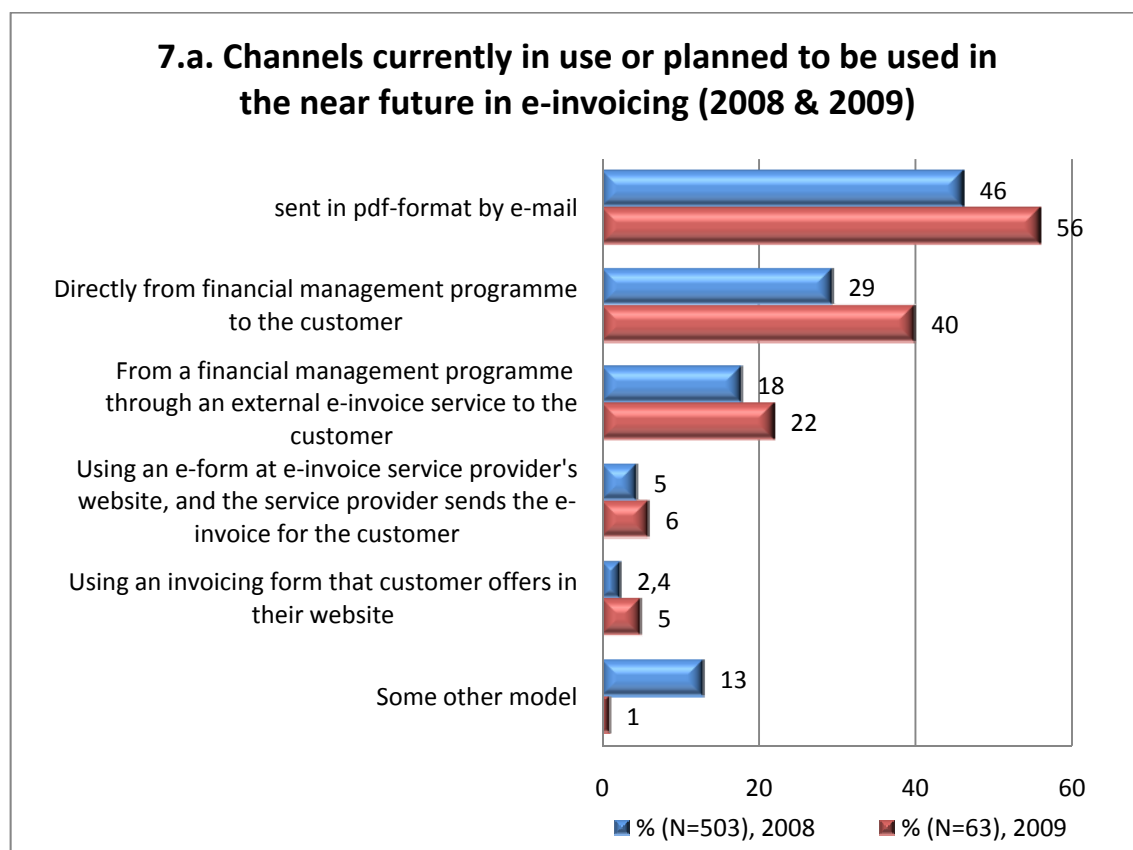


Figure 18: Models of electronic invoicing in use, 2008 and 2009 statistics (Suominen. 2008)

Sending an e-invoice with a financial management program (directly or through an external e-invoice service) was chosen 39 times by 33 enterprises, as six of them chose the both options. At this point 33 enterprises expressed that they are using a financial management program to send e-invoices directly or indirectly (see the table 5), although 48 enterprises in the next question stated that they were using an e-Financial management program. The difference of the figures may be explained with the diversity of the functions of an e-Financial Management system. The rest of the Financial Management program users, who are not sending e-invoices, may very well be exploiting only the other functions of the program, for instance filing electronic statements or book keeping activities.

Table 5: E-invoicing

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cum. Number</i>	<i>Cum. %</i>
Directly from financial management program to the customer	19	58	19	58
From a financial management program through an external e-invoice service to the customer	8	24	27	82
Both options	6	18	33	100
Total:	33	100	33	100

Question 7.b: Financial Management: Does your company at this moment use an electronic financial management program? (Yes, No)

The table 6 below shows that 60 per cent, i.e. 48 enterprises replied that they were using an e-Financial Management program at the moment. The functions of e-Financial Management system was introduced in the chapter 6.2 *Digital Financial Management*.

Table 6: The usage rate of e-Financial Management system

Does your company currently use an electronic financial management program?	
<i>%, N= 80</i>	
Yes	60
No	34
no response	6
Total:	100

Question 7.c: Financial Management: Choose from the four column variables the best describing option for your electronic financial management program's features.

In the Financial Management section (7) the respondents were also asked to evaluate the functionality of e-Financial management related information systems. Despite the question was presented for 63 respondents, only 37-39 responses were received for each category in this question. (figure 19)

Sales invoices, purchasing invoices, and electronic statements were the three areas with the most satisfied users: 79 per cent or more were happy with the current stage of these sectors. 25 per cent of the respondents were not using an e-financial management program in relation to purchase invoices. Around 15 per cent didn't find electronic statements or electronic invoices/net invoices concerning their enterprise. Electronic sales invoices were found as not concerning by only 5 per cent of the respondents.

Willingness to develop the discussed areas of financial management was low. Enterprises saw the most need for development in electronic and net invoicing (10 respondents). Implementation of new information systems was in mind of only few enterprises: e-invoicing and net invoices (3), sales invoices (1).

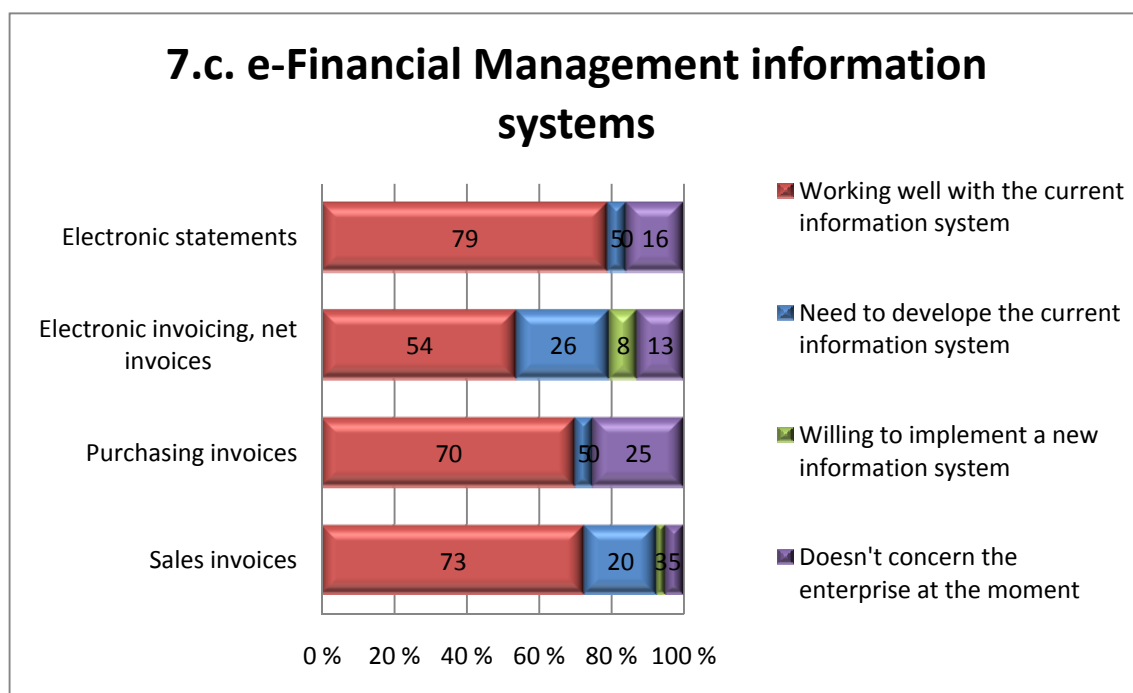


Figure 19: e-Financial Management information systems (N=37-39)

Question 7.d: Which options your company is currently using in payment transactions

56 (70%) respondents were using net bank and 20 (25%) multibank program in their money transactions.

7.2.6 Customer service, sales and marketing

Question 8: CRM: Choose from the four column variables the best describing option for your company. (customer service, sales, and marketing)

In the question 8 the respondents were asked to evaluate the state of customer service, sales and marketing information systems. The amount of responses given in this section is higher than in the previous sections discussing other business areas in a similar manner. 76-78 respondents responded to each stated question. The phenomenon is most likely due to the fact that the business activities evaluated in this section are essential part of any business aiming to return profit.

Remarkable portion, over 50 per cent of the whole sample appeared to be happy with their customer service, sales and marketing information systems (see the figure 20). Willingness to implement new information systems was again close to zero. Exceptionally the amount of not concerned with enterprises was also low: six or less enterprises in each sector chose this option.

With the customer service, sales and marketing information systems need for development was a bit higher (12-30 enterprises for each sector) than with the other two business areas evaluated earlier by using the same categories. The number of respondents was the highest of all the similarly formed questions in question 8. A conclusion can be made that the terms used in the question eight are more familiar for the respondents.

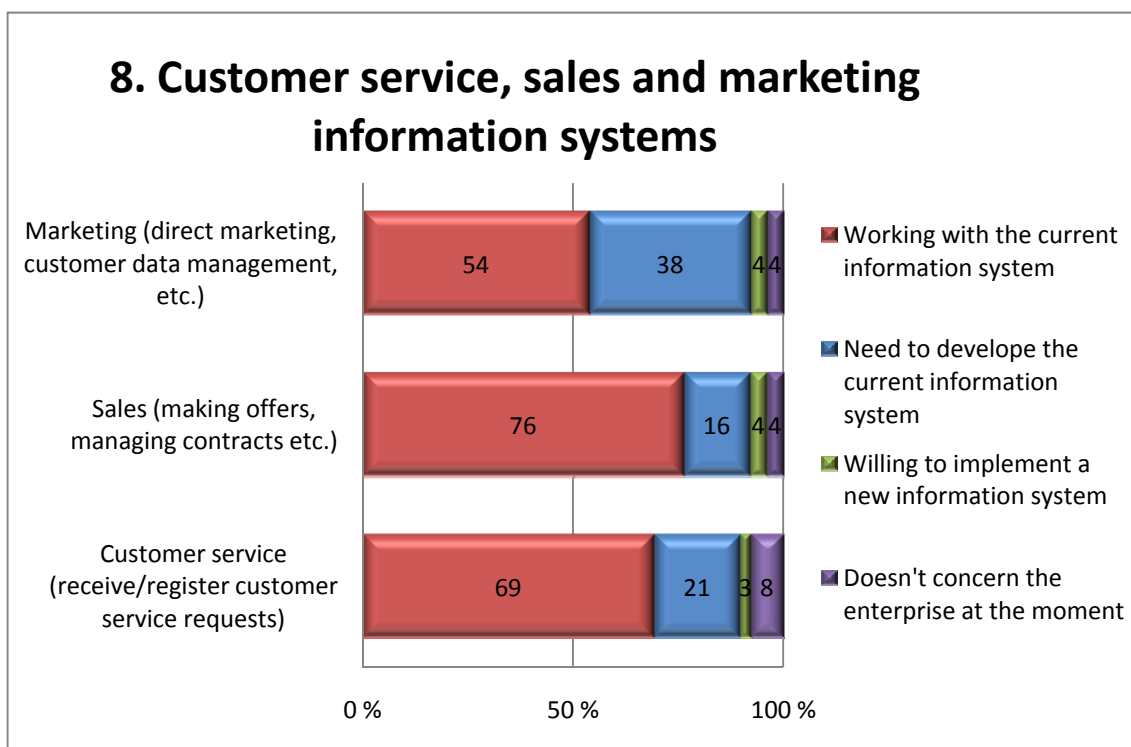


Figure 20: Customer service, sales, and marketing information systems (N=76-78)

7.2.7 SCM, ERP, and Resource Management

Question 9 and 10: SCM, ERP, and Resource Management: Choose from the four column variables the best describing option for your company. (SCM, ERP, Resource Management)

The structure of the figure 21, describing the state of the SCM, ERP, and Resource Management information systems, is different from the other figures (17, 19, and 29) also illustrating the state of the information systems in SMEs. The proportion of the happy users of the SCM-, ERP-, and Resource Management information systems is 53 per cent or less in each factor, when the corresponding proportion of happy users of other information systems (figures 17, 19, and 29) is 54-79 per cent.

The lower level of satisfied users of these information systems is related to the fact, that these factors of business don't concern a good proportion of the SMEs. One third answered that SCM and Resource Management doesn't concern them, and half of the respondents did not have a connection with ERP activities. The response rate in this section was lower than in average in the questions concerning the information systems (ERP N=43, SCM N=60, Resource Management N=77).

Need for development was low among the information system categories evaluated here. 7 respondents (16%) had a need to develop ERP information system and the corresponding figure for SCM was 8 respondents (13%). The Resource Management information system needed development in 19 SMEs (25%).

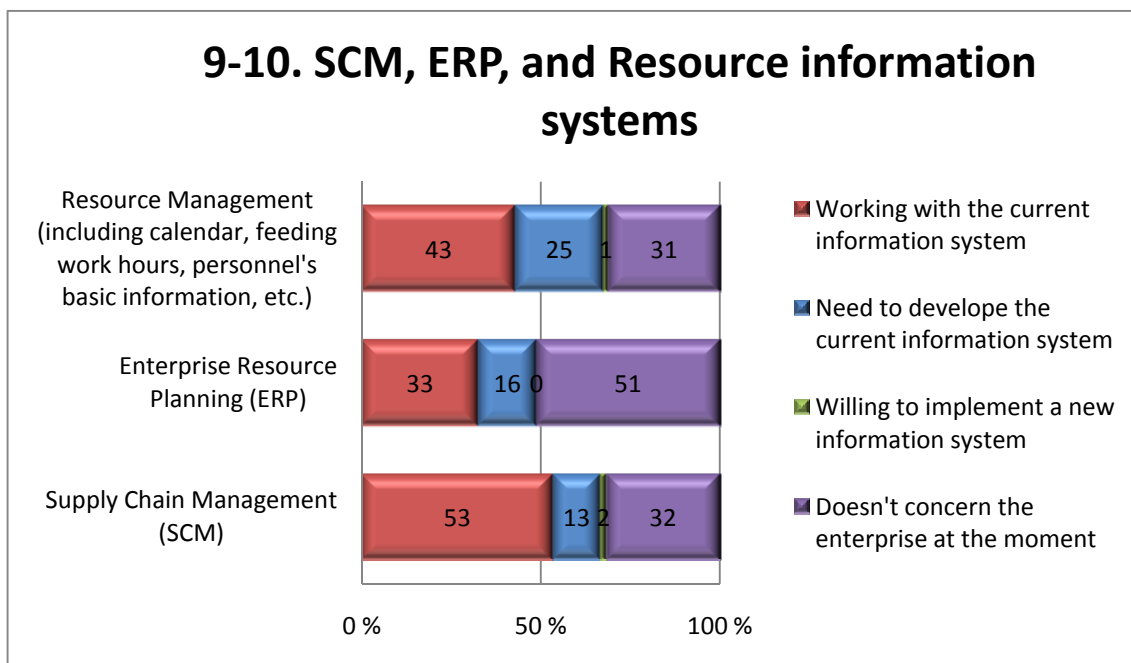


Figure 21: SCM, ERP, and Resource Management information systems

7.2.8 Attitude towards new implementations (of information systems) and changes

Based on the responses on the questions concerning the information systems of several business factors, need for development in different areas of e-business was low (less than 20 enterprises in each spot). Willingness to implement totally new information systems was close to zero in each category. The only change to the current situation that the enterprises seem to have positive attitude towards is the market growth, as 72 per cent were optimistic about growing their market share in the near future.

e-Financial Management information systems and customer service, sales and marketing information systems charts followed both the same trend: the objects, in which the respondents were least satisfied with, were the most popular targets for development. In e-Financial management section the object was internet and net invoicing, and in Customer service, sales and marketing section marketing. Together the proportions of those who were happy with the current situation or willing to develop the information system (in the questions of e-Financial management and CRM) yield close to 75 per cent or more. This refers that information systems have been utilized in the majority of the sample SMEs.

The number of enterprises with functional information systems, or the number of those who weren't concerned with particular systems, had no impact on the amount of enterprises willing to implement a new information system. This option was unpopular regardless of the other options' popularity.

Noteable is that the difficult terms (such as *information system, ERP, and SCM*) used in the questions concerning the information systems may have caused misunderstanding of some questions. The kind of scenario would decrease the reliability of the survey results.

7.2.9 Internet Marketing

Question 11.a: Internet Marketing: Choose the options that best describe the situation in your company.

The respondents were eager to give their responses regarding the Internet marketing, as all of the 80 respondents participated (see the figure 22). Only 10 per cent hadn't implemented a web site to support their marketing and sales and 50 per cent of them were about to implement one. One third of the 80 respondents were happy with their current pages, but 55 per cent saw a need for development.

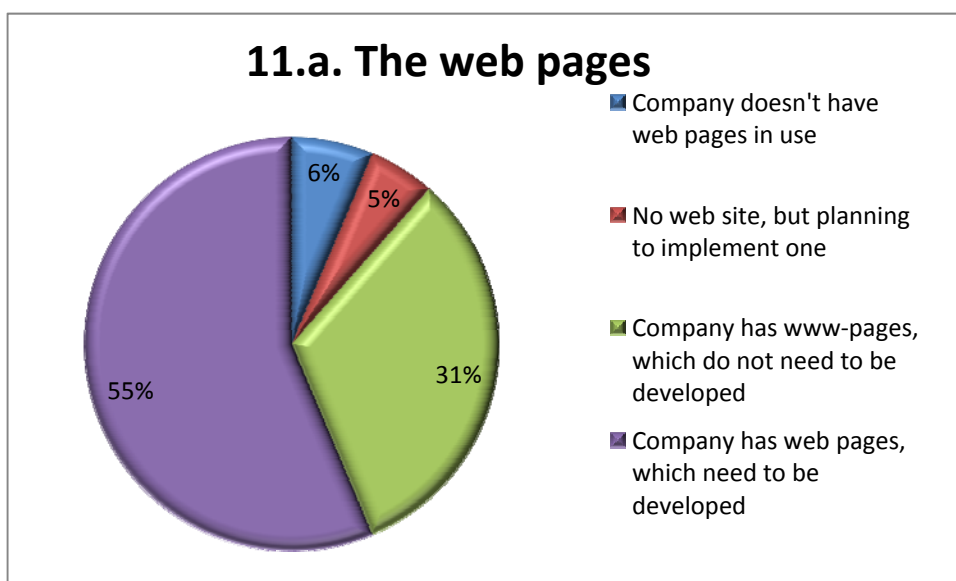


Figure 22: Web sites (% , N=78)

Question 11.b: Internet Marketing: The content of the web site- the options that best describe the situation in your company.

Content of the web pages was in a quite simple stage: 78 per cent included the company's basic information including the field of business, and 38 per cent included information about the products or services (see the figure 23). 77 per cent offered possibility for direct contacting. The question about direct contacting opportunity included a few examples of direct contacting, and one of the examples was e-mailing. Therefore part of the respondents may have chosen this option due to displaying their e-mail address at the site, which in fact should be counted in the category of publishing company's contact information at the site. This result does not therefore represent the real level in which the direct contacting possibilities are used by the respondents.

Social media linked with the web pages was used only by 6 per cent of the respondents. This means that they offered a chance for public conversation at the site or a link to a forum enabling the conversation. The majority seems to find the use of social media not beneficial to their enterprise. The reason for social media's unpopularity among the SMEs may be related with the way the small enterprises often do business. Many small companies, especially micro enterprises, have so to speak modest way of doing business. They may be just making their living and not feel an urge to increase the enterprise's turnover. Or they have quite small or regular customer base, which doesn't want to or doesn't know how to use the kind of communication opportunities.

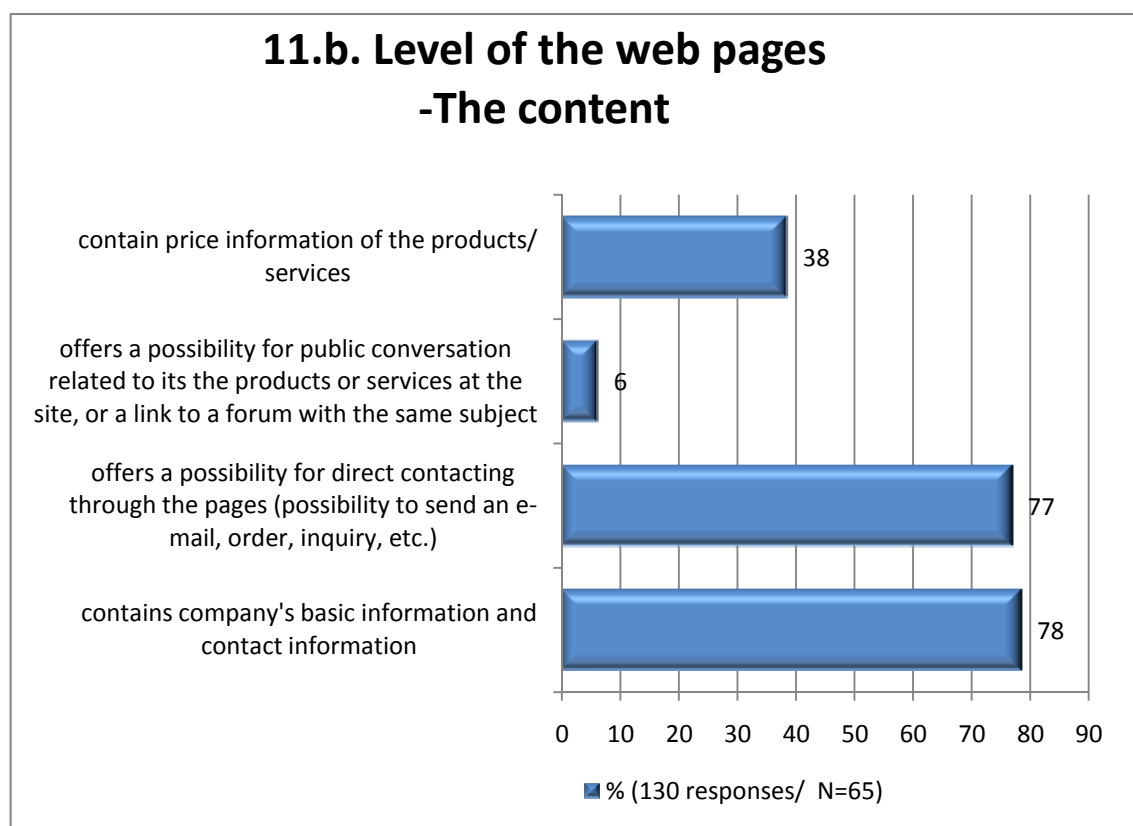


Figure 23: Level of the web pages

Question 11.c: Internet Marketing: Choose the alternatives which most likely will be used in your enterprise within the next two years.

Short term future vision of Internet marketing showed that the enterprises are still strongly for the traditional channels of marketing. 34 enterprises, i.e. 44 per cent, predicted that they will increase Internet marketing within the next two years (see the figure 24), but at the same time they saw the important to keep the traditional marketing in the same level as earlier. 16 enterprises (21 per cent) were going to increase Internet marketing and decrease the traditional means at the same time. All together 50 respondents stated that they were going to exploit Internet marketing within the next two years.

65 per cent of the web sites are “publishing sites” i.e. on the stage 1 measured with Hanson’s scale that is also introduced in the page 17 (Hanson. 2000. 10). 64 per cent were on the stage 2, by offering basic possibility to contact and interaction.

Only 18 per cent (14 enterprises) were interested in being involved with e-commerce or Internet societies (such as Facebook or LinkedIn). 21 per cent (16 enterprises) thought that they wouldn’t be using any form of Internet marketing during the next years.

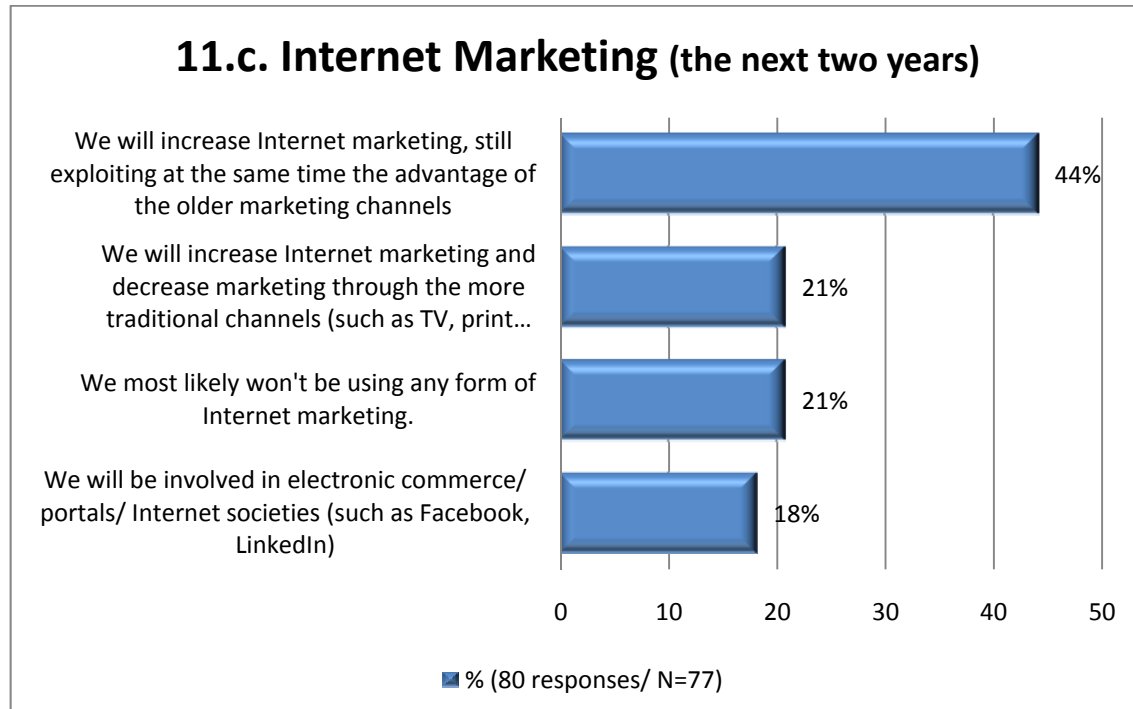


Figure 24: Internet marketing

A question for the Internet Marketing-course participants only:

Choose the alternatives that you believe would bring real benefit for your company.

The group of respondents that had participated the Internet marketing course were addressed an additional question about their visions of the marketing and sales related features that would bring real benefit to their companies. The given alternatives can be seen from the chart below. Although advertising through e-mail, visibility in internet societies, and advertising and visibility in web publications, web pages and societies were seen as the three most favorable forms of marketing, each of them gained only 10 votes (50 per cent of respondents).

The largest group with similar choices consisted of those ten enterprises who believe in the Visibility in web publications, sites and internet societies. Six of these enterprises see e-mail advertising as the best option in addition to creating visibility.

Table 7: Marketing- / communication channels bringing the most value

Choose the alternatives that you believe would bring real benefit for your company:	
<i>(Only the Internet-marketing course)</i>	<i>Number</i>
Advertising through e-mail	10
Visibility of the enterprise in internet societies (such as LinkedIn, Facebook)	10
Advertising/visibility in internet societies, web pages, web publications	10
Own blog/ conversation forum that discusses products or services you provide	4
An instant message service for customers (for example customer support via Internet)	2
Presence in company catalogues/ phone books (Eniro, Yritystele etc.)	2
Website that contains basic information about the field of business, contact information, product-/ service- and price info	1
Website that contains basic information of the field of business and contact information	1
Sales of services or products in electronic commerce trade centres	1
Total:	41
N:	17

7.2.10 The outcomes

The results reveal that the entrepreneurs' willingness to invest in several business areas has decreased as compared to the situations in 2008 and 2007. There is no question whether the current economic situation has an impact on the SME's willingness to invest. The primary market area in which the enterprises were willing to grow their market share was Finland. 24 per cent of the growth oriented SMEs were willing to operate in international markets, but the majority of them would be operating also in the domestic market at the same time.

The trend seems to be that the procedures of small enterprises are quite simple and do not usually require a third party interference. When the implementation of an application is seen as necessary the application is usually rather entirely bought instead of leasing the service from an application service provider (ASP). The same pattern of favoring the more direct processes recurs when money transactions are made: The transactions are usually implemented by using a fully owned application that directly guides the transaction to the respondent's bank account, instead of using a more complex option that might include also interference of a third party or another application.

Renewing the existing information systems didn't attract the majority of the respondents. Of the two unpopular options making developments to the old information systems was clearly more popular, than the implementation of a totally new system. Extending the customer base was in the mind of 95 per cent of the 57 entrepreneurs (72%) who were willing to increase their market share. The companies believed the future growth of their market share to be a consequence of increased sales and the amount of customers rather than being facilitated with the expansion of the product groups or the field of business. Still development of products and production was in the top three development targets. The other two popular targets were the development of marketing, and sales and customer service.

65 per cent (N=77) expressed that they would increase Internet marketing in the near future. However, only 21 per cent were planning to reduce the other forms of marketing at the same time. The Internet marketing will then in the most cases be used in addition to the former marketing channels. Keeping the traditional means of marketing in the same level while increasing the Internet marketing will naturally increase the marketing expenses. It seems like the risk of failing to utilize Internet marketing successfully is too high for a huge proportion of the SMEs, and therefore the more traditional means of the marketing can't be left out.

Increasing the amount of marketing by utilizing a new channel next to the previously used ones could also be a strategic decision of some SMEs. In the chapter 6.1.4 *The business cycle and marketing* Owater, the sports drink company, was intentionally increasing the marketing budget to fight back the negative changes in the market that appeared due to the prevailing economic situation.

8 Conclusions

The theoretical part made it clear that gaining the most benefit from the e-tools requires careful selection of tools based on the needs of an enterprise, understanding of business operations and the functions of the programs in use, and exploiting all the features of software and hardware that are essential for the company in a proper manner. Different e-tools are supporting each other's functions and often in means to gain the maximal benefit, different software solutions need to be integrated as an entity where different electronic business processes are supporting one another. As an example, an e-CRM system is supporting marketing, finance, ERP and nearly every factor of electronic business.

8.1 Business cycle and entrepreneurship

If the business cycle follows the pattern of the '90s recession (introduced in page 9), there will be a period when the number of enterprises decreases greatly, followed by a longer period when the number of enterprises starts steadily increasing (as unemployed people start to employ themselves) until the employment situation is so much improved that it influences the number of entrepreneurs negatively (the improved employment situation will attract them to leave the entrepreneurship). As the heaviest decline of the entrepreneurship is now going on (see table 1), we are living the first phase where the number of enterprises is decreasing.

It is expected that within the following years the SMEs will move on to the second phase and the number of the enterprises will start slowly but steadily increase again. The predictions for the next 12 months show that the situation of employment will be weakening heavily when the situation of entrepreneurship will face only modest weakening. This also suggests that the situation when increased unemployment starts encouraging people to become entrepreneurs is getting closer.

The economy and the employment situations are affecting the number of entrepreneurs, but how does it influence the adoption of electronic processes or other important strategic decisions? The empirical part revealed some noteworthy differences in SMEs behavior as compared to the situation in 2007-2008. The number of enterprises not investing or having not yet decided on investments had increased tremendously as compared to the situation in 2008 (see the figures 12-16).

The SMEs were generously naming the targets needing development (see figure 5), which implies that the areas in need for development are recognized but something is preventing the entrepreneurs from executing the needed investments. Although the amount of enterprises will begin increasing after some years, the influences of the recession will still be tangible and likely constricting the investment willingness for some years.

If new investments to develop the old information systems or to create new ones are not made, the lack of new software, hardware, and education of the personnel will prevent the SMEs from moving on to the next level in e-business utilization. The economic decline will be limiting the investments of SMEs and postpone the development of business operations.

A positive outcome of the e-business-survey is that training and education was one of the most popular investment targets. As stated in the theory part already, the reason why the new software normally is implemented is the aim of simplifying and fastening processes, and inefficient use of software or hardware will prevent reaching the goal and possibly harm several business processes at the same time, if the SME has an integrated system. In this light, substantially ample intentions to invest in training and education could be one factor enabling and possibly accelerating the adaptation of e-business tools. If the training and education sector remains its top position as the number one investment target, the recovery of the economy will bring along increased number of well educated employees, as the amount and number of actualized investments increase.

8.2 No changes in sight

The respondents were reluctant to conduct any major changes concerning their way of doing business. The entrepreneurs were hardly at all eager to implement new information systems in any business area (see the figures 17, 19, 20, and 21), as well as the popularity of developing the existing information systems was low with all factors represented in the related figures. The only exception in this section was the marketing information system, which 30 respondents found needing development.

The apparent reluctant attitude may also be a consequence of too difficult forming of questions, as in the questions examining the state of the several different information systems the term *information system* was used to refer to the comprehensive entity of the interaction between different processes, people, and information. In the question one, where the development needs were asked about, the enterprises named plenty of different targets.

This suggests that the SMEs were willing to do some development on their business processes, as long as the processes are approached separately. Handling too complex set of the interaction and processes at the same time may be confusing, especially if the terms in use are unfamiliar. To avoid bias the form of the questions should be revised for the questionnaire of 2010. Another option would be explaining the most unfamiliar terms in the questionnaire, but as correct understanding of the terms can't be guaranteed, the best option would be to avoid difficult terms as much as possible.

8.3 The current level of e-business

In the chapter 5.1 *Characters of an e-business* three criteria were given that define whether an enterprise fits the concept of e-business. The majority of the SMEs in the final sample fulfill the criteria number one, as they are processing and communicating data with electronic devices (figure 10). The second criterion is that an enterprise has to experience increased integration of databases and hardware devices. How well and how much the different databases and hardware are integrated in SMEs was examined in the survey, but it can be assumed that the companies with e-SCM and e-CRM systems for example have already an integrated system of devices and databases. These two first criteria were fulfilled by a fair proportion of the final sample, which implies that the situation e-business adaptation among the SMEs, which already have received consultation on the subject and are located in Tampere Region, is quite good.

The last factor to be fulfilled before fitting the Jackson and Eckersley's definition of an e-business (chapter 5.1) is enabling interactive use of systems and services. This criterion was the most difficult one to accomplish for the local SMEs, as based on the content of their web sites only 6 per cent is currently offering a possibility for the customers to be interactively involved. Enterprises conducting e-commerce, for instance, will also fulfill this requirement and earn the right to be classified as an e-business.

The majority of the sample fulfill two out of the three criteria, which is a very good result taking into consideration that the third criterion may not fit the business concept of many SMEs. If there is no need for interactive services from customers' -, partners' -, or any other party's side, this condition is useless to fulfill.

Also creation of such services may be too complicated and expensive for SMEs. For example delivery surveillance service, where customers may follow their packages, would require constant maintenance after the establishment. Outsourcing the service partly or totally is an option, if the money resources are sufficient to cover the expenses. An application service provider (ASP) could also be an optimal option for an SME, but this form of purchasing applications was unpopular among the sample enterprises.

8.4 The Internet marketing and social media

If compared to the situation in the USA (page 18), the trust in Internet marketing is in a lower level within the sample. Only 18 per cent predicted that they'd be involved with Internet societies, e-commerce or portals within the next two year. On the other hand as 49 per cent were planning some developments to be done on the sales and customer service sector in the near future, and this makes the future of the interactive services hard to predict. As the huge social media such as YouTube and Facebook have both been super popular in Finland only for a short period of time, the SMEs might still need some time to adapt the idea of the possibilities of the new marketing channel. Also the trend in the USA doesn't concern the SME sector alone. The nature of the business and customer relationships may greatly differ between small and large enterprises as well as it affects the suitability of marketing channels.

In the chapter 6.1.6 the research results of the conversation forum-survey show that it is possible for discussion boards to have loyal users and trustworthy reputation. The majority of the respondents were active users of the forum and nearly everybody had read some comments about products or services posted by somebody else. The most important finding of the discussion board-survey was that the effect of the other members' postings on the readers was huge.

The next step for someone interested in examining the impacts of social media on individuals and their purchasing decisions could be defining the characteristics of few other popular forums or other platforms of social media. The survey conducted now didn't find out how many times the respondents had posted a comment about a service or a product, or how many products/services the comments had covered. The both statistics become however necessary, if the rate of activity in a forum, or the likelihood of occurrence of discussions concerning products and services is measured.

Marketing was the area that the majority (50%) saw as needing development (see the figure 5). The smallest companies saw the development of marketing even more important (see the table 4). More than half of the final sample was willing to increase their market share in the near future and the majority expected the possible growth to be driven by extending their customer base and increasing sales. Only 44 per cent had tried an e-marketing campaign and even less, 25 per cent, had an e-CRM system.

As the SMEs expressed their willingness to develop their current marketing methods and strategy, it could very well be the solution how to reach the goal of increased sales. New customers that would bring new sales along as well could be attracted by a well planned and executed marketing campaign. About 80 per cent had a web site but less than half of the final sample had executed a special e-marketing campaign. As the influence of the Internet buzz was proved in the chapter 6.1.6, the Internet marketing could very well be the key solution assisting the enterprises in the aim of increasing market share.

8.5 The research project

The empirical study examining the state of e-business was conducted in the beginning of the research project, and the theory part was written partly at the same time and partly after the survey was conducted. Writing the theory part before the empirical research phase would have supported more careful consideration of the research questions and the modification of the research questions to give better responses to the questions.

The response rate after the first e-mail invitation to the survey was significantly low, which delayed the project from moving to the next phase. This could have been avoided by increasing the number of the enterprises approached by e-mail. Also additional invitation campaigns might have affected the number of those who responded to the invitation.

One research question, whether the interconnected business operations are influencing each other's utilization rate of electronic tools, remains unsolved. The theory part cleared up that many operations are interconnected and if the operations are digitalized, the exchange of information in an integrated system is nearly or partly totally automatic. No sign that utilization of one e-tool would encourage an enterprise to acquire another tool could be seen from the results. The statistics of the information systems' functionality or the order of adopting some electronic functions (see the figure 9) gave no answer to the question, whether adaptation of some software or other e-tool would likely lead to adaptation of another object.

This information is naturally found interesting by the businesses offering such products and services, but also relevant for the SMEs and consultative parties in general. If a certain trend could be recognized, it could be used in investigating whether the e-business adaptation is done "by the books". *Are all the necessary operations digitalized, in which level the electronic tools are utilized and in which order the tools have been adopted* are all important questions, as systematic and analytical evaluation of processes is necessary to ensure a suitable level of e-business utilization.

No enterprise is likely to do decisions on investing in hardware, software or education lightly, but still cases where the adaptation process of some electronic tools turn out to be ineffective or affecting the business processes negatively. Some of these cases could be avoided by careful analyses of the nature of the business, related factors (such as the customers, market, competition, economy), and the past successes and failures in e-business adaptation of comparable enterprises. The adaptation of e-tools should always begin from the necessities and then continue to the factors, which are electrified because of wants instead of needs.

Different e-tools are not put in any order based on their importance in this research. The next research questions inspired by this study could be: Is there a logical order of adopting e-tools that would in general be applicable with all the SMEs regardless of the field of business, and Are the SMEs mainly following the order or not.

Follow-up on the recovery of the investment willingness would also be interesting: Will the investment intentions decrease or increase in the next and the following years. The willingness to do investments is also reflecting the entrepreneurs trust towards the market. As this year's statistics showed, the SMEs had lots of targets for development but only very few intentions to invest large amounts in any area. It seems like the SMEs postponed any large investments not essential for conducting business. When the investment willingness begins its recovery, it means that the expectations of unfavorable development of the economy are gone. When the economical situation is not directly preventing the SMEs from investing in e-business, a good research question could be if the amounts of intended investments are increased and what proportion of the investments is targeted to develop electronic business. This would give more reliable picture of the small entrepreneurs' attitudes towards the utilization of e-business tools.

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10 Appendices

10.1 Questionnaire, case eYrityspalvelu and Internet marketing course participants

E-lomake - Sähköinen liiketoiminta ja kehityskohteet Pirkanmaalaisissa ...

<https://lomake.tamk.fi/v3/lomakkeet/1617/lomake.html>

Sähköinen liiketoiminta ja kehityskohteet Pirkanmaalaisissa pk-yrityksissä

Tämä kysely on suunnattu Pirkanmaalla sijaitseville eYrityshankkeessa mukana olleille mikro-, pien-, ja keskiuurille yrityksille. Kyselytutkimus kartoittaa sähköisen liiketoiminnan tilaa ja kehitystarpeita Pirkanmaalaisissa yrityksissä, ja tukee siten Pirkanmaan Buusti-hanketta.

Lisää tietoa hankkeesta: www.pirkanmaanbuusti.fi

Antamamme tiedot käsitellään luottamuksellisesti, eikä yksittäisten yritysten antamia tietoja julkaista tutkimuksessa tai anneta edelleen kolmannen osapuolen haltuun.

ESITIEDOT

Näitä esitietoja tullaan käyttämään ainoastaan yrityksen henkilöstön määrän, toimialan yms. tiedon määrittämiseksi, joka tukee tutkimusta. Yksittäisten yritysten antamia vastauksia ei tulla julkistamaan tai yhdistämään yrityksen tai vastaajan nimeen.

Yrityksen nimi:

Yrityksen edustajan nimi:

1. KEHITYSTARPEET

1.a. Yrityksen Kehitystarpeet -Valitse alla olevasta listasta ne alueet, joiden kehittämisen katsot olevan ajankohtaista nyt tai lähitulevaisuudessa.

- Tietotekninen osaaminen (atk-perustaidot, toimisto-ohjelmistot)
- Markkinointi (esim. mainonta, pr, markkinoinnin suunnittelu, kuluttajamarkkinointi)
- Myynti ja asiakaspalvelu (esim. kielitaito, myyntityö, myynnin kehittäminen)
- Tuotteisiin ja tuotantoon liittyvä kehittäminen
- Sähköinen taloushallinto
- Toimintoihin liittyvä hallinta (esim. kasvun- tai riskien hallinta, tuottavuuden kehittäminen)
- Toimintoihin liittyvä hallinta (esim. varastotoimintojen hallinta, alihankinta, ostotoimintojen kehittäminen)
- Verkkokauppa

Muu kehityskohde, jonka katsot olevan ajankohtainen yrityksessänne:

1.b. Mikäli omistajan vaihdos on yrityksessänne ajankohtaista, valitse alta ne osa-alueet, joiden kehittämisen katsotte tarpeelliseksi.

- Yrityksen myyminen
- Yrityksen ostaminen
- Hallittu sukupolven vaihdos

Muu omistajan vaihdokseen liittyvä toiminto:

2. Liiketoimintojen sähköistyminen yrityksessänne

Merkitse numeroilla ne sähköisen liiketoiminnan eri vaihtoehdot, jotka yrityksessänne tällä hetkellä ovat käytössä tai jotka ovat aiemmin olleet käytössä.

1= ensin käyttöön otettu, 2= toiseksi käyttöön otettu, 3= kolmanneksi...

Kotisivut
e-Markkinointi kampanja (esim. hakukone- ja banneri markkinointi)
e-Asiakkuudenhallinta/ CRM ohjelma (kuten ClientCare-Net, Super Office CRM)
sähköinen taloushallinnon ohjelma

3. Sähköisen kaupankäynnin palvelumuodot yrityksessä

Otatte vastaan tai lähettätte tarjouksia sähköisesti.

- Kyllä
- Ei

Maksatte teille tuotteita tai palveluita tarjonnille yrityksille sähköisesti.

- Kyllä
- Ei

Otatte vastaan maksuja sähköisesti asiakkailtanne.

- Kyllä
- Ei

Tarjoatte tietoja tuotteistanne/ palveluistanne sähköisessä muodossa.

- Kyllä
- Ei

4. Investoinnit

Paljonko yrityksenne on valmis investoimaan tietotekniikkaan ja sähköiseen liiketoimintaan seuraavan kahden vuoden aikana? ?

Show headers	Ei Investointia	Satoja euroja	Tuhansia €	Kymmeniä tuhansia €	en osaa sanaa
4.a Laitteisto	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.b Ohjelmistojen hankinta	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.c Ohjelmistojen vuokraus (Internetin välityksellä tapahtuva vuokraus, esim. sähköinen taloushallinnon ohjelmisto)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.d Koulutus (ATK, sähköinen liiketoiminta)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.e Tukitoiminnot (esim. ylläpito, suunnittelu)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. KASVUHALUKKUUS

Yrityksen kasvuhalu

Show headers	Kyllä	Ei	Ei osaa sanaa
Oletteko halukas kasvattamaan yrityksenne markkinaosuutta lähivuosina?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Kasvu suuntautuu kotimaanmarkkinoille	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Kasvu suuntautuu kansainvälisille markkinoille	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kasvun oleellisenä osana on tuoteryhmän tai toimialan laajentaminen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kasvun oleellisenä osana on asiakaskunnan ja myynnin kasvattaminen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. TOIMISTOYMPÄRISTÖ: laitteet ja ohjelmistot

Valitse neljästä sarakemuuttujasta parhaiten vasemmalla allekkain lueteltujen osa-alueiden tilaa kuvaava vaihtoehto

Show headers	Tarve kehittää nykyistä tietojärjestelmää	Toimii nykyisellään	Halutaan ottaa käyttöön	Ei kosketa yritystä tällä hetkellä
Toimisto-ohjelmat (tekstinkäsittely, taulukkolaskenta, sähköposti, kalenteri, projektin hallinta)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ohjelmistojen vuokraus (ASP) esim. sähköinen taloushallinnon ohjelmisto, kotisivut	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sähköinen asiointi (sähköisten viranomaispalveluiden käyttö, kuten vero- ja maksupalvelut)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sähköisissä kauppapaikoissa/ portaaleissa mukana oleminen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. TALOUSHALLINTO

7.a. Valitse tavat, joita yrityksessänne käytetään tai suunnitellaan otettavan käyttöön lähiaikoina sähköisen laskun lähettämiseksi.

Show headers	Kyllä	Ei
Suoraan taloushallinto-ohjelmasta asiakkaalle	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Taloushallinto-ohjelmasta ulkopuolisen e-laskupalvelun kautta asiakkaalle.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Käyttäen asiakkaan kotisivullaan tarjoamaa laskutuslomaketta	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Käyttäen e-laskupalveluja tarjoavan yrityksen nettilomaketta, josta palvelun tarjoaja lähettää asiakkaallesi sähköisen laskun	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
lähetetään pdf-muodossa sähköpostitse	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Joku muu sähköinen muoto, mikä:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7.b. Onko yrityksessänne tällä hetkellä käytössä sähköinen taloushallinnon ohjelmisto?

Kyllä
 Ei

Jos vastasi EI yllä olevaan kysymykseen, siirry seuraavaan osioon: **ASIAKKUUDEN HALLINTA (CRM)**

7.c. Valitse neljästä sarakemuuttujasta parhaiten sähköisen taloushallinnon ohjelmiston ominaisuuksia kuvaava vaihtoehto

Show headers	Tarve kehittää nykyistä tietojärjestelmää	Toimii nykyisellään	Halutaan ottaa käyttöön	Ei kosketa yritystä tällä hetkellä
Myyntilaskut	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ostolaskut	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sähköinen laskutus, verkkolaskut	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
sähköiset tiliotteet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Muu sähköisen taloushallinnon kehityskohde:

7.d. MAKSULIIKENNE: Valitse alta ne vaihtoehdot, jotka ovat yrityksenne maksuliikenteessä käytössä.

Verkkopankki (Internet)
 Monipankkiohjelma

8. ASIAKKUUDEN HALLINTA (CRM)

Valitse neljästä sarakemuuttujasta parhaiten yrityksen tilaa kuvaava vaihtoehto.

Show headers	Tarve kehittää nykyistä tietojärjestelmää	Toimii nykyisellään	Halutaan ottaa käyttöön	Ei kosketa yritystä tällä hetkellä
Asiakaspalvelu (mm. palvelupyyntöjen vastaanotto ja kirjaaminen)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Myynti (mm. tarjousten tekeminen, sopimusten hallinta)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Markkinointi (mm. suoramarkkinointi, asiakastietojen hallinta)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Muu ajankohtainen kehityskohde liittyen yllä mainittuihin toimintoihin:

9. Toimitusketjunhallinta (SCM) ja Tuotannonohjaus järjestelmä (ERP)

Valitse neljästä sarakemuuttujasta parhaiten yrityksen tilaa kuvaava vaihtoehto.

Show headers	Tarve kehittää nykyistä tietojärjestelmää	Toimii nykyisellään	Halutaan ottaa käyttöön	Ei kosketa yritystä tällä hetkellä
Hankinta/ Toimintaketjun hallinta (SCM)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Toiminnanohjaus järjestelmä (ERP)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. RESURSSIEN HALLINTA

Valitse parhaiten resurssienhallinnan tilaa (sisältäen kalenteritoiminnot, työtuntien syöttäminen, henkilöstön perustiedot, työtuntien syöttö ym.) kuvaava vaihtoehto

Show headers	Tarve kehittää nykyistä tietojärjestelmää	Toimii nykyisellään	Halutaan ottaa käyttöön	Ei kosketa yritystä tällä hetkellä
Henkilöstöresurssit/ Resurssit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. INTERNET MARKKINOINTI

11.a. WWW-SIVUT - valitse tilannettanne parhaiten kuvaavat vaihtoehdot

- 1 Yrityksellä ei ole www-sivuja käytössä
- 2 Ei käytössä, mutta aiotaan ottaa käyttöön
- 3 Yrityksellä on www-sivut, joiden suhteen ei kehitystarvetta
- 4 Yrityksellä on www-sivut, joita aiotaan kehittää

Mikäli valitsit vaihtoehdon 1 tai 2 ole hyvä ja ohita sivujen sisältöä koskevat kysymykset.

11.b. Sivujen sisältö: valitse tilannettanne parhaiten kuvaavat vaihtoehdot

- Sivut sisältävät yrityksen perus- ja yhteystiedot
- Sivut tarjoavat mahdollisuuden yhteydenottoon suoraan sivustolta (sähköpostin, tilauksen, kyselyn tms. lähettäminen mahdollista)
- Sivut tarjoavat mahdollisuuden julkiseen keskusteluun sivustolla yrityksen tuotteisiin palveluihin liittyen, tai linkin samanaiheiselle keskusteluforumille
- Sivut sisältävät tuotteiden palveluiden hintatietoja

11.c. INTERNET MARKKINOINTI (mm. kotisivut, banneri- /blogi-mainonta, hakukonemarkkinointi) Valitse vaihtoehdot, jotka parhaiten kuvaavat yrityksenne tilannetta. Seuraav

- tulemme lisäämään internet-markkinointia, hyödyntäen kuitenkin edelleen aiemmin käytössä olleita markkinointi kanavia
- tulemme lisäämään internet-markkinointia ja vähentämään perinteisiä mainonnan muotoja (kuten TV, radio, printti mainonta)
- emme todennäköisesti tule käyttämään mitään internet-markkinoinnin muotoa
- tulemme olemaan mukana sähköisissä kauppapaikoissa/ portaalissa internet yhteisöissä (kuten facebook, LinkedIn)

Proceed

Kiitos osallistumisestasi!

Tallentaaksesi ja lähettääksesi tiedot, paina yläpuolella sijaitsevaa *SAVE* painiketta.

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10.2 One dimensional tabulations: The e-business survey

One dimensional tabulations Sähköisen liiketoiminnan kyselytutkimus

1.a. Needs for development

mr

Choose the business areas which you find as topical or about to become topical targets for development in your enterprise.

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
IT skills (basic IT-skills, office programs)	27	40
Marketing (advertising, PR, marketing plan, consumer marketing etc.)	34	50
Sales and Customer service (language skills, sales work, development of sales etc.)	33	49
Development of products and production	32	47
Electronic Financial Management	20	29
Operations management (growth or risk management, development of productivity etc.)	23	34
Operations management (warehouse management, subcontracting, development of procurement etc.)	16	24
Electronic commerce	15	22
Other	7	0
Total:	207	294
N:	68	

Other target to be developed:

			<i>Cumulative</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Laatujärjestelmä (quality system)	1	14	1	14
SÄHKÖINEN TALOUSHALLINTO: ULKOISTETTU (e-financial management is outsourced)	1	14	2	29
Yrityksen laajentaminen (extending enterprise)	1	14	3	43
eYrityspalvelua käytettiin sellaisen liiketoiminnan kehittämiseen, joka on sittemmin myyty (eYrityspalvelu was used to enhance such business activity that has afterwards been sold)	1	14	4	57
excel-tilukko ohjelman opiskelu, 7-v vanha tietokone, uuden hankinta (the use of excel spreadsheet, 7 years old computer; buying a new one)	1	14	5	71
markkinointi: yrityksellä täsmä tuotteet joista asiakkaat itse yhteydessä (about marketing: smart products, of which the customers approach the company)	1	14	6	86
myyty liiketoiminta, johon eYrityspalv. Käytettiin (Business is sold, in which the eYrityspalvelu was used)	1	14	7	100
Total:	7	100	7	100

Mean:

1.b. Change of the ownership and the form of enterprise

Is the change of the ownership current in your company (if yes, specify)?

			<i>Cumulative</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Acquiring or selling an enterprise	7	70	7	70
Controlled change of generation	3	30	10	100
Total:	10	100	10	100

Mean:

1,3

Other, specify:

			<i>Cumulative</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
6 vuoden päästä	1	11	1	11
k.o. liiketoiminta myyty 2008	1	11	2	22
lainsäädäntö ja verotus	1	11	3	33
lainsäädäntö ja verotus, rahoituksen suunnittelu	1	11	4	44
omistusjärjestelyt	1	11	5	56
osakeyhtiöksi vaihtoa miettineet	1	11	6	67
sopimusten tekeminen, lainsäädäntö ja verotus	2	22	8	89
yritysmuodon muuttaminen	1	11	9	100
Total:	9	100	9	100

2. Give ordinal numbers to the factors of e-business, based on the order of implementation (1=the first implemented, 2= the second implemented, and so on).

Web site

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Implemented as the first one (1)	49	71	49	71
Implemented as a second one (2)	17	25	66	96
Implemented as a third one (3)	3	4	69	100
Implemented as a fourth one (4)	0	0	69	100
Total:	69	100	69	100
Mean:	1,3			

e-Marketing campaign (search- or banner marketing etc.)

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Implemented as the first one (1)	3	9	3	9
Implemented as a second one (2)	14	40	17	49
Implemented as a third one (3)	14	40	31	89
Implemented as a fourth one (4)	4	11	35	100
Total:	35	100	35	100
Mean:	2,5			

eCustomer Relationship Management (such as ClientCare-Net, Super Office CRM)

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Implemented as the first one (1)	2	10	2	10
Implemented as a second one (2)	7	35	9	45
Implemented as a third one (3)	7	35	16	80
Implemented as a fourth one (4)	4	20	20	100
Total:	20	100	20	100
Mean:	2,7			

Electronic Financial Management program

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Implemented as the first one (1)	26	58	26	58
Implemented as a second one (2)	13	29	39	87
Implemented as a third one (3)	4	9	43	96
Implemented as a fourth one (4)	2	4	45	100
Total:	45	100	45	100
Mean:	1,6			

3. The forms of electronic commerce in use. The enterprise is currently: mr

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Receiving or sending offers electronically	52	87
Paying for products or service providers electronically	45	75
Receiving electronic payments from customers	37	62
Offering information over own products or services in an electronic form	55	92
Total:	189	315
N:	60	

4. Investments

How much your company is willing to invest in IT and e-Business within the following two years?

Hardware

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
No investments	18	23	18	23
Hundreds	20	25	38	48
Thousands	27	34	65	81
Tens of thousands	2	3	67	84
I can't say	13	16	80	100
Total:	80	100	80	100
Mean:	2,7			

Programs (purchasing)

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
No investments	27	34	27	34
Hundreds of euros	27	34	54	68
Thousands	11	14	65	81
Tens of thousands	2	3	67	84
Not decided	13	16	80	100
Total:	80	100	80	100
Mean:	2,3			

Programs (APS)

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
No investments	52	65	52	65
Hundreds of euros	9	11	61	76
Thousands	3	4	64	80
Tens of thousands	0	0	64	80
I can't say	16	20	80	100
Total:	80	100	80	100
Mean:	2,0			

Training, education

			<i>Cumulative</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
No investments	24	30	24	30
Hundreds of euros	40	50	64	80
Thousands	6	8	70	88
Tens of thousands	0	0	70	88
I can't say	10	13	80	100
Total:	80	100	80	100
Keskiarvo	2,2			

Support (maintenance, design)

			<i>Cumulative</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
No investments	28	35	28	35
Hundreds of euros	31	39	59	74
Thousands	7	9	66	83
Tens of thousands	0	0	66	83
I can't say	14	18	80	100
Total:	80	100	80	100
Mean:	2,3			

5. Growth scenarios

Are you willing to increase your company's market share in the near future?

			<i>Cumulative</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Yes	57	72	57	72
No	11	14	68	86
Don't know	11	14	79	100
Total:	79	100	79	100
Mean:	1,4			

The future growth will occur in domestic market

			<i>Cumulative</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Yes	53	93	53	93
No	4	7	57	100
I can't say	0	0	57	100
Total:	57	100	57	100

The future growth will occur in international market

			<i>Cumulative</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Yes	14	29	14	29
No	31	63	45	92
I can't say	4	8	49	100
Total:	49	100	49	100

Conclusion from the answers above:

			<i>Cum.</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
The future growth will take place simultaneously in both domestic and international markets	11	100	11	100
Total:	11	100	11	100
Mean:	1,0			

An essential part of the future growth will be extension of a product group or the field of business

			<i>Cumulative</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Yes	22	41	22	41
No	29	54	51	94
I can't say	3	6	54	100
Total:	54	100	54	100

An essential part of the growth will be extension of the customer base and sales

			<i>Cumulative</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Yes	54	95	54	95
No	1	2	55	96
I can't say	2	4	57	100
Total:	57	100	57	100

*20 respondents (35% out of 57) ticked the both options.

6. Choose from the four column variables the best fitting option towards each factor:

The most basic office applications

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative</i>	
			<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Need to develop the current information system	12	16	12	16
Working well with the current information system	64	83	76	99
Willing to implement a new information system	0	0	76	99
Doesn't concern the enterprise at the moment	1	1	77	100
Total:	77	100	77	100
Mean:	1,9			

Software leasing (ASP)

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative</i>	
			<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Need to develop the current information system	15	19	15	19
Working well with the current information system	31	40	46	60
Willing to implement a new information system	0	0	46	60
Doesn't concern the enterprise at the moment	31	40	77	100
Total:	77	100	77	100
Mean:	2,6			

Use of electronic official services of authorities

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative</i>	
			<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Need to develop the current information system	14	19	14	19
Working well with the current information system	44	59	58	78
Willing to implement a new information system	3	4	61	82
Doesn't concern the enterprise at the moment	13	18	74	100
Total:	74	100	74	100
Mean:	2,2			

Involvement with e-commerce or portals

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative</i>	
			<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Need to develop the current information system	14	19	14	19
Working with the current information system	27	37	41	56
Willing to implement a new information system	3	4	44	60
Doesn't concern the enterprise at the moment	29	40	73	100
Total:	73	100	73	100
Mean:	2,6			

7.a. Financial Management

Choose the channels which are used or planned to be used in near future to send an electronic invoice:

Directly from financial management program to the customer

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Yes	25	46	25	46
No	29	54	54	100
Total:	54	100	54	100
Mean:	1,5			

From a financial management program through an external e-invoice service to the customer

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Yes	14	29	14	29
No	35	71	49	100
Total:	49	100	49	100
Mean:	1,7			

Using an invoicing form that customer offers in their website

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Yes	3	6	3	6
No	47	94	50	100
Total:	50	100	50	100
Mean:	1,9			

Using an e-form at e-invoice service provider's website, and the service provider sends

the e-invoice for the customer

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Yes	4	10	4	10
No	36	90	40	100
Total:	40	100	40	100
Mean:	1,9			

sent in pdf-format by e-mail

			<i>Cumulative</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Yes	35	64	35	64
No	20	36	55	100
Total:	55	100	55	100
Mean:	1,4			

Some other electronic mean, specify:

			<i>Cumulative</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Yes	1	5	1	5
No	20	95	21	100
Total:	21	100	21	100
Mean:	2,0			

[no headline]

			<i>Cumulative</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
faxi	1	33	1	33
matkalaskut, palkanlaskenta, asiakasrekisteri sähköisenä, CRM taitaa olla isommille firmoille/ Finvoice 1.3 pankki ei pysty käsittelemään sen tuoksia/ Omat atk-taidot kaipaavat koulutusta	1	33	2	67
pankin kautta	1	33	3	100
Total:	3	100	3	100

7.b. Does your company at this moment use an electronic financial management programme?

			<i>Cumulative</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Yes	48	64	48	64
No	27	36	75	100
no response	5			
Total:	80	100	75	100

7.c. Choose from the four column variables the best describing option for your electronic financial management programme's features:

Sales invoices

			<i>Cumulative</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Need to develop the current information system	8	21	8	21
Working well with the current information system	29	74	37	95
Willing to implement a new information system	1	3	38	97
Doesn't concern the enterprise at the moment	1	3	39	100
Total:	39	100	39	100

Purchasing invoices

			<i>Cumulative</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Need to develop the current information system	2	5	2	5
Working well with the current information system	28	72	30	77
Willing to implement a new information system	0	0	30	77
Doesn't concern the enterprise at the moment	9	23	39	100
Total:	39	100	39	100

Electronic invoicing, net invoices

			<i>Cumulative</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Need to develop the current information system	10	26	10	26
Working well with the current information system	21	55	31	82
Willing to implement a new information system	3	8	34	89
Doesn't concern the enterprise at the moment	4	11	38	100
Total:	38	100	38	100

Electronic statements

			<i>Cumulative</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Need to develop the current information system	2	5	2	5
Working well with the current information system	30	81	32	86
Willing to implement a new information system	0	0	32	86
Doesn't concern the enterprise at the moment	5	14	37	100
Total:	37	100	37	100

Other target for development in electronic financial management:

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
laskuohjelma käytössä, siitä kirjanpitäjälle tai laskuna paperilla	1	50	1	50
e-laskun liitteiden ominaisuudet- PANKKIEN Fin-voice toimimaton	1	50	2	100
Total:	2	100	2	100
Mean:				

7.d. Netbank and multibank program

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Netbank in use	56	92
Multibank program in use	20	33
Total:	76	125
N:	61	

8. Customer service (receive/register customer service requests)

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Need to develop the current information system	16	21	16	21
Working with the current information system	54	69	70	90
Willing to implement a new information system	2	3	72	92
Doesn't concern the enterprise at the moment	6	8	78	100
Total:	78	100	78	100
Mean:	2			

Sales (making offers, managing contracts etc.)

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Need to develop the current information system	12	16	12	16
Working with the current information system	58	76	70	92
Willing to implement a new information system	3	4	73	96
Doesn't concern the enterprise at the moment	3	4	76	100
Total:	76	100	76	100
Mean:	2			

Marketing (direct marketing, customer data management, etc.)

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Need to develop the current information system	30	38	30	38
Working with the current information system	42	54	72	92
Willing to implement a new information system	3	4	75	96
Doesn't concern the enterprise at the moment	3	4	78	100
Total:	78	100	78	100
Mean:	2			

Other current target for development within the focus group mentioned above:

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Edustamme Global Passenger Networkia, jolle uTrack www.utrack.com on kehittänyt Travel-Manager-ohjelmiston	1	33	1	33
Ilmalämpöpumppujen mainonta kuluttajille	1	33	2	67
Verkkokaupan perustaminen	1	33	3	100
Total:	3	100	3	100

9. Supply Chain Management (SCM)

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Need to develop the current information system	8	13	8	13
Working with the current information system	32	53	40	67
Willing to implement a new information system	1	2	41	68
Doesn't concern the enterprise at the moment	19	32	60	100
Total:	60	100	60	100
Mean:	2,5			

9. Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Need to develop the current information system	7	16	7	16
Working with the current information system	14	33	21	49
Willing to implement a new information system	0	0	21	49
Doesn't concern the enterprise at the moment	22	51	43	100
Total:	43	100	43	100
Mean:	2,9			

10. Resource Management (including calendar, feeding work hours, personnel's basic information, etc.)

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative</i>	
			<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Need to develop the current information system	19	25	19	25
Working with the current information system	33	43	52	68
Willing to implement a new information system	1	1	53	69
Doesn't concern the enterprise at the moment	24	31	77	100
Total:	77	100	77	100
Mean:	2,4			

11. INTERNET MARKETING

11.a. Internet-marketing: web pages

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Company doesn't have web pages in use	5	6
No web site, but planning to implement one	4	5
Company has www-pages, which do not need to be developed	25	31
Company has web pages, which need to be developed	44	55
N:	78	98

11.b. The content

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
The site contains company's basic information and contact information	51	78
The site offer a possibility for direct contacting through the pages (possibility to send an e-mail, order, inquiry, etc.)	50	77
The site offers a possibility for public conversation related to its the products or services at the site, or a link to a forum with the same subject	4	6
Pages contain price information of the products/ services	25	38
Total:	130	200
N:	65	

11.c. Within the next two years:

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
We will be involved in electronic commerce/ portals/ Internet societies (such as Facebook, LinkedIn)	14	18
We most likely won't be using any form of Internet marketing.	16	21
We will increase Internet marketing and decrease marketing through the more traditional channels (such as TV, print marketing,radio)	16	21
We will increase Internet marketing, still exploiting at the same time the advantage of the older marketing channels	34	44
Total:	80	104
N:	77	

Questions addressed only to the Internet Marketin-group:

Within the next two years we will be involved in:

<i>(Only Internet marketing-group)</i>	Number	%	Cumulative	
			Number	Cum-%
Internet societies, such as Facebook and LinkedIn	5	28	5	28
Will not be involved in e-commerce or Internet societies	7	39	12	67
e-commerce	6	33	18	100
Total:	18	100	18	100
Mean:	2,1			

Choose the alternatives that you believe would bring real benefit for your company:

<i>(Only the Internet-marketing course)</i>	Number	%
Advertising through e-mail	10	59
Own blog/ conversation forum that discusses products or services you provide	4	24
Visibility of the enterprise in internet societies (such as LinkedIn, Facebook)	10	59
Sales of services or products in electronic commerce trade centres	1	6
Website that contains basic information about the field of business, contact information, product-/ service- and price info	1	6
Website that contains basic information of the field of business and contact information	1	6
Advertising/visibility in internet societies, webpages, web publications	10	59
An instant message service for customers (for example customer support via Internet)	2	12
Presence in company catalogs/ phone books (Eniro, Yritystele etc.)	2	12
Total:	41	241
N:	17	

The background Information gathered by using the eYrityspalvelu's search engine at their web site (<http://www.yrittajat.fi/yrityshaku/>)

Place of business			<i>Cum.</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Tampere	24	36	24	36
Nokia	4	6	28	42
Pirkkala	2	3	30	45
Viljakkala	1	1	31	46
Sastamala	6	9	37	55
Kangasala	4	6	41	61
Toijala	2	3	43	64
Luopioinen	1	1	44	66
Ylöjärvi	4	6	48	72
Pohjaslahti	1	1	49	73
Parkano	1	1	50	75
Virrat	2	3	52	78
Lempäälä	2	3	54	81
Ruovesi	3	4	57	85
Sotkia	1	1	58	87
Kurjenkylä	1	1	59	88
Luode	1	1	60	90
Laitikkala	1	1	61	91
Koro	1	1	62	93
Punkalaidun	1	1	63	94
Valkeakoski	1	1	64	96
Kuru	1	1	65	97
Hirsilä	1	1	66	99
Korkeakoski	1	1	67	100
Total:	67	100	67	100

The number of personnel	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cum. lkm</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
1 employee	28	41	28	41
2-9 employees	30	44	58	85
10-19 employees	10	15	68	100
Total:.	68	100	68	100

10.3 Cross-tabulation: The number of employees and the business sectors needing development

Row variable: The business sectors in which development is topical now or in the near future

Column variable: the number of employees

<i>%</i>	<i>1 em- ployee</i>	<i>2-9 em- ployees</i>	<i>10-19 em- ployees</i>	<i>Total:</i>
IT-sills (basic IT-skills, office programs)	33	36	50	37
Marketing (advertising, PR, consumer marketing, etc.)	54	48	20	46
Sales and Customer service (language skills, sales work, development of sales, etc.)	50	48	30	46
Development of products or production	50	52	40	49
Electronic Financial management	25	32	40	31
Operation's Management (growth or risk management, development of productivity etc.)	21	48	30	34
Operation's Management (warehouse mgt, subcontracting, development of procurement, etc.)	33	12	30	24
E-commerce	33	16	20	24
Total:	300	292	260	290
N	24	25	10	59

10.4 Questionnaire of the discussion board survey

E-lomake - Keskustelufoorumi

<https://lomake.tank.fi/v3/lomakkeet/1771/lomake.html?esikatselu=true>

Keskustelufoorumi



Tämä kysely on tarkoitettu Nokian Mammot-foorumin rekisteröityneille käyttäjille.

Kiitos vastauksistasi jo etukäteen!

*Vastaaajien kesken arvotaan 1 Finnkinon leffalippu. Arvontaan osallistuaksesi jätä yhteystietosi käyttäjätunnukseksi sille varattuun tilaan lomakkeen tallentamisen jälkeen.

Kysymykset

1. Valitse sinulle tärkeimmät syyt, miksi käytät foorumia (voit valita 1 tai useampia)

- saan osallistua mielenkiintoisiin keskusteluihin
- saan lukea muiden käymiä keskusteluja
- ylläpidän ystävyyssuhteita vaivattomasti internetin välityksellä
- saan uusia ystäviä ja tuttavuuksia
- saan erilaisia neuvoja ja ideoita
- saan osallistua järjestettyihin aktiviteetteihin ja tavata ihmisiä
- ystävänäkin käyttävät foorumia
- pysyn ajan tasalla
- saan vertaistukea
- verkostoituminen
- Se on helppoa
- Muu syy (mainitse alla olevassa kentässä mikä)

Muu syy, mikä:

2. Kuinka usein vieraillet Nokian Mammot-foorumilla?

- Lähes päivittäin
- Viikottain
- Harvemmin kuin viikottain

muu ajanmäärä:

3. Oletko lukenut foorumilla muiden käyttäjien mielipiteitä heidän käyttämästään tuotteista/ palveluista? (kuten parturi, ravintola, pesuaine, lääkäripalvelus)

- kyllä
- en

3.1 Miten paljon arvioit foorumilla esitettyjen mielipiteiden vaikuttavan omaan ostopäätökseesi?

Show headers 1 ei lainkaan 2 3 4 5 erittäin paljon
arvioi asteikolla 1-5

4. Miten kuvailisit Nokian Mammot-foorumia lyhyesti?

5. Oletko ilmaissut foorumilla omia mielipiteitäsi saamastasi palvelusta tai käyttämästä tuotteesta?

- Kyllä, positiivisesti (kehuut palvelua tai tuotetta)
- Kyllä, negatiivisesti (pettynyt saamaani palveluun tai tuotteeseen)
- En

6. Mitä seuraavista teet säännöllisesti?

Show headers	Lähes päivittäin	Viikottain	Kuukausittain	en käytä/ käytän harvemmin
Käytän Facebookia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kirjoitan omaa blogia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teen vaatehankintoja verkkokaupassa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ostan muuta kuin vaatteita verkkokaupasta	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Seuraan blogeja	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Luen toista keskustelufoorumia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Osallistun keskusteluun toisella keskustelufoorumilla	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. Uskotko vähentäväsi Nokian Mammot-foorumin käyttöä seuraavan kolmen vuoden aikana?

kyllä
 en

Olet nyt ollut mukana avittamassa minua askelen lähemmäksi laadukasta opinnäytetyötä. Lämmin kiitos osallistumisestasi!

Tallentaaksesi vastauksesi, paina alapuolella sijaitsevaa **SAVE** näppäintä.

Proceed

© Eduix Oy

10.5 The one-dimensional tabulations

One-dimensional tabulations

Case: Nokian mammat discussion board

1. Pick on the most important reasons for you to use the forum (you can choose 1 or more)

	mr	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
I get to participate in interesting conversations	36	63
I get to read conversations the others have had	28	49
I maintain friendships easily via Internet	9	16
I get new friends	29	51
I get different kinds of advices and ideas	45	79
I get to participate in organized activities and to meet people	30	53
My friends are also using the forum	10	18
Keeps me up to date	23	40
I get support from a peer group	41	72
networking	12	21
It's easy	13	23
Other reason	5	9
Total:	281	493
N:	57	

Other, what:

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Look at the question 3!	1	20	1	20
It's otherwise longsome at home, I feel like connected with others when I'm at the forum.	1	20	2	40
I get up-to-date information about my own city's events and services	1	20	3	60
I get information about locally important issues and services	1	20	4	80
Purchasing and selling items- recycling	1	20	5	100
Total:	5	100	5	100

Mean:

2. How often do you visit Nokian Mammot-forum?

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Daily, almost daily	46	81	46	81
Weekly	9	16	55	96
More seldome	2	4	57	100
Total	57	100	57	100
Mean:	1,2			

Other period of time

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Ihan joka päivä	1	20	1	20
Monta kertaa päivässä! :)	1	20	2	40
Useamman kerran päivässä	1	20	3	60
Useasti päivässä	1	20	4	80
toisin sanoen monta kertaa päivässä :)	1	20	5	100
Yht.	5	100	5	100
Keskiarvo				

3. Have you read while visiting the forum other users' opinions about products or services they've used?

(like heardresser, restaurant, detergent)

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Yes	56	100	56	100
No	0	0	56	100
Total:	56	100	56	100
Mean:	1,0			

3.1 How much on your own estimation the opnions adressed at the forum are affecting on your own purchasing decisions?

Estimate on scale 1-5

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
1: not at all	0	0	0	0
2	3	5	3	5
3	18	32	21	37
4	32	56	53	93
5: very much	4	7	57	100
Total:	57	100	57	100
Mean:	3,6			

4. How would you describe Nokian Mammat-forum shortly?

	Number	%	Cumulative number	Cum-%
Aivan loistava tapa tutustua toisiin äiteihin	1	2	1	2
Ajantasaista ja itselleni ajankohtaista tietoa.	1	2	2	4
Aktiivinen foorumi jossa loistava yhteishenki eikä morkkaamisia!	1	2	3	6
Asiallinen foorumi. Ei haukuta toisia. Saa paljon tietoa Nokiasta mitä ei lehdistä tai netistä löydä :)	1	2	4	9
Energinen porukka, johon mahtuu monenlaiset äidit mukaan. Ei liian tiivis, mutta selvästi tunnettu.	1	2	5	11
Helppo, matalan kynnyksen paikka tutustua Nokian lapsiperheiden palveluihin ja nokialaisiin äiteihin lapsineen.	1	2	6	13
Hieno vertaistukiyhteisö	1	2	7	15
Hieno yhteisö, johon liittymisen kynnyks on melko matala , kun näin ulkopaikkakuntalaisenakin uskalsin liittyä. Mummila (kotikotini) sijaitsee nääs Nokialla.	1	2	8	17
Hyvä tiedonlähde. Sieltä saa monipuolisesti tietoa lasten hoidosta, kasvatuksesta ja kaikenlaisista arkisista askareista sekä kaupungin palveluista ym.	1	2	9	19
Hyvä tietolähde	1	2	10	21
Hyvä, toimiva ja tarpeellinen foorumi jota yrittään kehittää tarpeiden mukaan.	1	2	11	23
Ihana lämmihenkinen foorumi. kaikki on samalla viivalla, eikä ketään tuomita tekojensa/mielipiteidensä perusteella	1	2	12	26
Ihana!	1	2	13	28
Kotiäidille erittäin tarpeellinen ja mielekäs foorumi.	1	2	14	30
Loistava ja erittäin tärkeä yhteisö! ;)	1	2	15	32
Loistava paikka löytää uusia tuttavuuksia joita tavata livenäkin.	1	2	16	34
Luotettava ja ajantasalla oleva foorumi.	1	2	17	36
Lämmihenkinen ja tuttavallinen	1	2	18	38
Mahtava tapa löytää uusia ystäviä sekä tekemistä kotiäidin ja esioisen arkeen!	1	2	19	40
Mammat on rento ja kotoisa foorumi , jossa ei ole isoja konflikteja. Käyttäjät osaavat ottaa toiset huomioon. Mammoista saa yleensä apua ja vastauksen ongelmaan kuin ongelmaan.	1	2	20	43
Monipuolinen 'tietopaketti' nokialaisille vanhemmille!!	1	2	21	45
Mukava paikka, uskaltaa ilmaista omat mielipiteet ja kysyä rohkeasti jos jokin asia askarruttaa.	1	2	22	47

Mukava verkostoutumiskanava, jonka välityksellä voi saada jopa oikeita ystäviä.	1	2	23	49
Mukava, vilkas kohtaamispaikka samassa elämäntilanteessa oleville, ajatusten ja mielipiteiden vaihto välitöntä mutta asiallista	1	2	24	51
Paikallisista asioista infoava, kaikenlaisia mielipiteitä hyväksyvä, tärkeä foorumi.	1	2	25	53
Paljon parempi, kuin monet muut vastaavat. Sieltä saa asiallista tietoa, kun muilla palstoilla lähinnä haukkumista kun jotain kysyy.	1	2	26	55
Paras keskustelufoorumi mitä löytyy, ihanan paikallinen, tärkein verkostoitumispaikka Nokialaiselle äidille	1	2	27	57
Paras kohdennettu keskustelupalsta, jonka tiedän	1	2	28	60
Pienen kynnyksen foorumi. Keskustelijat ovat ihmisiä eivät pelkiä nimimerkkejä.	1	2	29	62
Reilu ja rehti sekä suvaitsevainen	1	2	30	64
Selkeä ja asiallinen	1	2	31	66
Turvallinen ja luotettava , läheinen	1	2	32	68
Tärkeä henkireikä, ilman en enää osaa elää.	1	2	33	70
Tärkeä informaatiokanava. Tietoa jaetaan lastenhoidosta, tapahtumista yms., mutta ihan yhtä hyvin paikkakunnan palveluista, resepteistä jne.	1	2	34	72
Tärkeä tiedotuskanava lapsiperheelliselle Nokialla	1	2	35	74
Vastaus moneen kysymykseen.	1	2	36	77
aivan loistava yhteisö, olisi itselleni vieläkin merkityksellisempi jos olisin vielä kotona lasten kanssa	1	2	37	79
aktiivinen, lämmihenkinen	1	2	38	81
arjen apuväline	1	2	39	83
avoin ja helposti 'lähestyttävä'	1	2	40	85
erittäin loistava ja vireä yhteisö	1	2	41	87
leppoisaa jutustelua aiheesta kuin aiheesta toiset huomioon ottaen	1	2	42	89
mukava paikka kuulostella muiden lapsiperheiden kuulumisia ja arkea	1	2	43	91
mukava, tietoa paikkakunnasta antava	1	2	44	94
siisti ja asiallinen, hiukan 'sisäänpäin' suuntautunut	1	2	45	96
välitön, avoin, lämmin , informatiivinen, aktiivinen	1	2	46	98
Äitien paikallinen keskustelufoorumi netissä.	1	2	47	100
Total:	47	100	47	100
Mean				

5. Have you impressed your own opinions about a service you've had or a product you've consumed at the forum?

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Yes, in positive tone (praised a service or product)	47	82
Yes, in negative tone (I've been disappointed on a service or a product used)	24	42
No	10	18
Total:	81	142
N:	57	

6. What of the following alternatives do you do regularly:

Use Facebook

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Daily	44	77	44	77
Weekly	2	4	46	81
Monthly	1	2	47	82
Using more seldome or not at all	10	18	57	100
Total:	57	100	57	100

Write my own blog

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Daily	2	4	2	4
Weekly	1	2	3	5
Monthly	3	5	6	11
Using more seldome or not at all	51	89	57	100
Total:	57	100	57	100

Purchasing clothes at an online store

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Daily	0	0	0	0
Weekly	0	0	0	0
Monthly	21	37	21	37
Using more seldome or not at all	36	63	57	100
Total:	57	100	57	100

Buying something else than clothes online

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Daily	0	0	0	0
Weekly	0	0	0	0
Monthly	21	37	21	37
Using more seldome or not at all	36	63	57	100
Total:	57	100	57	100

Following blogs

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Daily	6	11	6	11
Weekly	13	23	19	33
Monthly	7	12	26	46
Using more seldome or not at all	31	54	57	100
Total:	57	100	57	100

Reading another conversation forum

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Daily	18	32	18	32
Weekly	7	12	25	44
Monthly	8	14	33	58
Using more seldome or not at all	24	42	57	100
Total:	57	100	57	100

Participating in conversations in another conversation forum

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Daily	11	19	11	19
Weekly	7	12	18	32
Monthly	5	9	23	40
Using more seldome or not at all	34	60	57	100
Total:	57	100	57	100

7. Do you expect your usage of the Nokian mammat-forum to decrease during the following three years?

	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Cumulative number</i>	<i>Cum-%</i>
Yes	14	25	14	25
No	42	75	56	100
Total:	56	100	56	100
Mean:	1,8			