E-Commerce and Social Media Use in Cambodia

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Abstract

We adopt Media system dependency theory (MSD) to examine e-commerce and social media use in Cambodia. A field study was conducted by performing semi-structured interviews with three major e-commerce website owners: Little Fashion, Khmer24.com, and Comptech.com. Through the lens of MSD, we observe how these e-commerce websites were established by using a grass-root approach. Furthermore, we interview local business owners who are using social media—Facebook and YouTube—as tools of marketing and customer services. We found that 1) e-commerce activities are fully depends on social media and that 2) from a media perspective Facebook plays the role of fulfilling user’s needs of getting information and services and that 3) e-commerce activities are highly depend on big players such as Facebook and Google. We also found that the environment is yet mature for e-commerce activities but opportunities exist for business ventures. The social background of Cambodia is unique, as such, the online activities and social media use behavior is completely different from what is observed in western countries and we conclude few unintended consequences of social media use which go beyond the scope of our knowledge.

Keywords (Required)

E-Commerce, Cambodia, Media Dependency, Social Media, Digital Divide.

Introduction

Cambodia’s mobile phone subscribers surpassed fixed-line subscribers; it is the first country that has more mobile subscribers than fixed-line subscribers (Abo et al., 2008). In 2017, 7.16 million Cambodian use Internet and this accounts for 45% of the total population of 15.9 million (Soh, 2017). Mobile phones is the way that Cambodian use the Internet; without the mobile devices most of the Cambodian who do not have fixed-line phone won’t be able to be networked. It is envisioned by 2018, more than 99% being reachable through some sort of phone (Phong et al., 2016). In 2016, the number of mobile subscribers has exceeded the country’s population; in 2017, the mobile phone penetration rate has reached 74% (Statista, 2016; Soh, 2017). In Asian-Pacific countries, the number of mobile social media users was set to reach 1 billion by the fourth quarter of 2015; and in Cambodia, it increased 108% from the previous year (Baliga, 2015). Over 98% of Internet subscriptions are from mobile devices (Brito and Son, 2015). Active social media users and active social mobile users have both seen a 1.5 million increase each, to 4.9 million and 4.4 million respectively in 2017 (Soh, 2017). In 24 provinces, 2,597 nationally representative youth aged 15-24 year old join the UN survey and the survey found that that 96% of these users report that they had access to a phone (The UN Development Program, 2014). The high percentage of mobile phone usage enable social media such as Facebook to be popular in Cambodian. Greatly improve the computer literacy because it is easy to learn and use.

Facebook has firmly established itself as the choice social media platform for Cambodian users. There are 1.4 million growth since 2016. In 2017, a total of 4.8 million users recorded. Instagram as another
viable platform for the Cambodian users. In 2017, they have 111,000 daily active users (Soh, 2017). A study to participants whose age ranges from 15 to 65, suggests that Facebook is the most interest social media (70% of respondent); YouTube (28%) turns out to be the second interest social media (Phong et al., 2016).

In this paper, we adopt the media dependency theory to examine the e-commerce and social media use in Cambodia. The theory posits that media use and audience shall be studied in the social system where contextual factors have to be taken into account. Cambodia’s unique social-economic environment is in particular need to be observed with a lens of how needs can be fulfilling under the circumstance that technologies are supplied highly from foreign resources. There is a dependency in technical standards and e-services, and digital contents. From the business environment is also highly depended on foreign investment. The business model of online ventures are also created with western online business in mind. In the next session, we review the media dependency theory.

Literature Review

Media system dependency theory (MSD)

Media system dependency theory (MSD), or simply media dependency, was developed by Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melvin Defleur in 1976 (Ball-Rokeach and Defleur, 1976). Grounded in classical sociological literature, the theory posits that media and their audiences should be studied in the context of larger social systems (Ognyanova and Ball-Rokeach, 2012). MSD ties together the interrelations of broad social systems, mass media, and the individual into a comprehensive explanation of media effects. In MSD, the more a person depends on media to meet needs, the more important media will be in a person’s life, and therefore the more effects media will have on a person.

In Ball-Rokeach and Defleur’s conceptual model (1976), society, media, and audience influence each other and through the interactions, society and media together create cognitive, affective, and behavioral effects to the audience. In the case of Internet use, the media refers to the Internet and the audience is the Internet users. Internet is an interactive medium that users will be able to use the media to communicate with other users for a variety of purpose; thus it creates media effects to the users. Using MSD, researchers studied the effects of using Spanish and English SNS; participants’ attitude and cultural formation are of foci of the study (Li and Liu, 2017). In a study compare older people and young people, results show online content was mostly purchased by young generation. Instead, older generation did not make purchase as much as those who are younger. In the case of online content purchase, age, shopping habits, ownership of mobile apps and devices are identified as reasons that influence online content purchasing behaviors (Yang et al., 2015).

MSD is also applied to system use intention study. A ubiquitous media systems (UMS) study shows that the overall effect of ubiquitous media systems dependency on individuals’ reasoned continuance usage decision. The results suggests the level of dependency towards a UMS raises the perceived positive attributes about the system (Carillo et al., 2017).

Bridging Digital Divide

To narrow the digital divide, Information communication technologies (ICTs) shall be made available for underserved communities. Telecenters, for instance, are prepared for communities that are lack access to basic infrastructure and services. These communities shall not be left out (Aji et al., 2016). Researchers have explored how those telecenter initiatives in underserved communities bring positive effect to bridge the digital divide (Tanner and du Toit, 2015). In the case of Cambodia, the digital divided can be bridged through the adoption of wireless network which is the current technological standard widely adopted in the country. Other than networked services, the e-services and contents over the Internet, delivered by wireless network, is the next step of bridging digital divide. The goal of this step is to allow citizens in Cambodia to be able to use the Internet services as what can be used in western world.

Applying MSD, we observe the use behaviors of Cambodia e-commerce and social media use. Our research questions are:
Cambodia E-Commerce

1. How the e-commerce and other Internet activities is shaped?
2. How social media plays a role in e-commerce activities?
3. How the use of social media create opportunities and challenges to e-businesses?
4. How the government regulations helps or regulated the e-commerce?

These questions guide us to use the MSD perspective to analyze use behaviors and e-commerce and social media use. With the MSD, we are able to examine whether media (the Internet/social media) create cognitive, affective, and behavior effects to users. In the following section, we describe the research method of this study.

Method

The interviews were conducted in July, 2017 at Phnom Penh, Cambodia and follow-up interviews in Feb 2018 via Facebook conversations. We first introduce ourselves and explained the purpose of our interview is to understand current situation of e-commerce and social media use in Cambodia. Each of the interview is about 30-40 mins. We started with few questions that do with the use behaviors of Internet user and then we drew questions from the responses of the interviewees. After the interviews we acknowledge their time and efforts for answering our questions and we explain that the interviews will be used for academic use and we will provide the results of our study as a reward of accepting our interview.

A total of seven stakeholders of e-commerce participate our interview. The demographics of the interviewees are listed in Table 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Business Owner</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>IhaveMall Shop Owner (R. Leang)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Business Owner</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>JBL Cambodia Owner (S. Sang)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Business Owner</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Little Fashion.com Website CIO (V. In)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Business Owner</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Khmer24.com Website Owner (R. Ty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Business Owner</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Camtoptec.com (J. Teck)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Workshop Attendee</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Real estate agent attending Camtoptec’s Facebook workshop (J. Keen)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Government Officer</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Government Officer, Ministry of Commerce Cambodia (P. Tang)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We utilized the procedure of data collection that are typically used in qualitative studies. Below we describe the details on how our data collection was performed. There are two steps: 1) the interview protocol; 2) data analysis:

1. The interview protocol: A total of seven interviewees are invited to join our study. We visit them on site. For Instance, we visit the Little Fashion office and then conduct interview with the CIO. Other than visit the online website owners, we also interview the local business owners at Phnom Penh city, Facebook workshop attendee at Camtoptec office, and officer of Ministry of Commerce at the government office. We first explain the purpose of our interview and tell interviewees the procedure how our interview will be performed. For business owners, they described their experience of starting up their websites and how they use Facebook and YouTube to take marketing actions. The Facebook workshop attendee describe the reason and experience of attending the workshop. We tape recorded the conversations.
(2) Data analysis: The interview was conducted in English language, so the transcripts were documented as it is. The information of the three business cases is acquired from the interviews. Local business owners and the Facebook Workshop describe their experiences involved with the business activities and purpose of participation the workshop. We directly quote the conversations in support of our analysis. To research the conclusion of our inference, we read and confirmed the data several times until we f. Second, we first looked over the data and tried to figure out a common theme, we first screen their conversation with us and then perform a transcript analysis. In this step, identifying the consistency of their experience in a must. Since we have a theory in mind, we then documented the findings to see if the findings match Media Dependency and digital divide. The procedure of the analysis comprises two-steps: we first figured out the story of utilization of social media to build up a success e-commerce website; and then we tried to look at the experiences that our stakeholder have in their e-commerce activities and social media use, if applies. We also examine the role of social media in support of build up these e-commerce ventures and through the government offer interview and workshop attendee we understand the behavioral, social, and legal aspect of Cambodia e-commerce. During the process of data collection, we raised few questions to the interviewees and then asked few more questions that drew from our conversation. We collected rich data which helped greatly for us to map out the story of the current state of e-commerce and social media use in Cambodia.

Findings

Business Case 1: The Little Fashion

The Little Fashion: Founded in 2011, the Little Fashion starts their online business with selling fashion appeals and accessories. A pure family business, Vichet In, set up the e-commerce website with two brothers and a sister. Obtained his Ph.D. in US University, Vichet envisioned that online business would be promising in Cambodia. He started the business since he was still in US graduated program. By having customers place order overs the Facebook, the most popular and social media in Cambodia, the Little Fashion successfully took the leading role of e-commerce (Russell 2017; Goh, M. and Jegarajah, 2017). After seven years of launching their business, the Little Fashion is making profits and financially independent. They provide a variety of products ranging from clothes, accessories, electronic appliances, and beauty products. 70% of the shoppers are female ranging from 18-27 years old. Average spend 55 USD per quarter. They carry most of products made in China with a budget price. Their suppliers are Taobao and other business in China.

Figure 1. Little Fashion: The leading e-commerce website
Cambodia E-Commerce

Photos taken by Researchers

**Khmerload.com:** Khmerload is a Mediaload company listed in Alexa as the 2nd popular website, with only YouTube ahead of it. It is also known as the number one and the best entertainment website in Cambodia that provide online services such as news, solving puzzles, and game playing. Two years ago, they got 200K USD from investing firm, 500 startups. In 2018, they are negotiating a 7-digit USD investment from a non-disclosed agreement. They are looking for investors and they do not know which investors will get the deal. Khmerload and Myanmarload (top 5 website in Myanmar), and vnload (a small team that they need more budget to spend in the future), are subsidiary companies of Mediaload. Currently Cambodia businesses spend only 5% of marketing budget on digital content, while in USA, the budget reach to almost 50% with digital marketing. CEO and co-founder Vichet In foresee that people will move to digital platform. As far as the popularity, they have 8.8 million unique visitors in Cambodia and Myanmar. CIO Visal In mentioned that Facebook made $10+ per unique visitor per quarter in Southeast Asia. Mediaload is registered as Singapore company as many Cambodia companies do. Myanmarload is registered in Myanmar. The company currently operates in both Cambodia and Myanmar, but it has designs to become the leading digital media player in Southeast Asia (Goh and Jegarajah, 2017). The purpose of having a media is to have a full control to marketing over the local media, not on other local service providers.

CIO Visal In mentioned that for media, they want audience shift to their own mobile Apps. Media, however, cannot be totally independent from big players. Either you depend on Apple, Google, or Facebook. If you go the app, you rely on Google Play and Apple store. He mentioned “Well, we are small company, so we also live within the big ecosystem that big companies created.” Facebook pay them and charge them the same time. As Facebook is moving to ads services. They need people to produce the content otherwise theirs is boring. Mediaload are content producers. So when people view the content, Mediaload share profit with Facebook. Like Google AdSense and YouTube, a user got paid to produce content that people read or watch. Mediaload shall be rely less on Facebook, because they also use YouTube, Line, and their own Apps and website. Website enables people to push notification Apps gains plenty of transactions as well. To ads, they pay Facebook and vice versa. Little Fashion need to pay Facebook when their ads there; Facebook also pay Little Fashion if their ads on their content. The API is free and Facebook pays Khmerload when they ads on us. In comparison with Facebook and YouTube, Amazon is not a big player in Cambodia, because it is hard to buy products from Amazon and then ship to Cambodia. Facebook pays Khmerload when they ads on Khmerlaod. On Khmerload side they are not totally happy but not much choice. There are few reasons that the dependency to Facebook is not pleasant. First, Facebook support is slow. If Little Fashion run into a problem, it takes many days for Facebook to solve. The services are fine but the support is not good enough. API is for free. When Facebook blocks on link of Little Fashion Website when it seems to violate their standard, but it is actually not. Little Fashion have to appeal to Facebook and it may take days or a month. “They will never tell you what you have violated, they just say to have violated and give list of all the rules. Those are not useful messages” Visal In said.

**Business Case 2: Khmer24 Marketplace**

**Khmer24.com** Marketplace established in 2009; it is the leading buy/sell online marketplace in Cambodia. Currently they have more than 210,000 (26000) registered users. 10 million unique visitors. It
is a primarily online shopping for Cambodia. The owners of Khmer24.com got the idea of the listing service from Craig list in USA and online websites in Singapore. Business model is the same with Craig list. Rady Ty, the owner, mentioned that the business model is identical to the online listing services in USA and Singapore. The user behaviors are also the same; he does not observe the differences. He owns an IT degree and set up the website from scratch and now he has 10 stuffs serve onsite providing services to users. The revenue model is based on the advertisements/banner ads that their clients paid. Users may sign in an account and post their products and it is free of charge.

Currently the marketplace has 99% Cambodia buyers. There are 50% B2C and 50%C2C users. They are the Craigslist in Cambodia. Their approach is different from Little Fashion that does both online and offline marketing. They mainly rely on word-of mouth to create user population. The challenge is the knowledge of users. Cambodia users has different knowledge from users outside Cambodia. Rady Ty is a computer science major trained in Cambodia. Never study abroad and passion make him does the website. Rady Ty loves online business since he was in year 2 university as Web programmer. The company is fully registered with government. There is no competitor yet. Both English and Cambodia postings can be found in the marketplace.

Business Case 3: Camtoptec.com

Camtoptec.com has started online business for five years. The website initially carried fake products with low quality. The shop owner who has computer science background started this family business with brothers and sisters not getting wage for work. Along with the website creates some success, the owner starts to think about provide services to the community. He gains popularity from the Facebook and YouTube videos. Currently Camtoptec.com has three divisions: Camtoptec provide services, Camtoptec shop carries US brand stereo products, and Camtoptec Store offers original products. Two issues emerges when this young entrepreneur does business online. Fake products are easy to acquire and profitable. However, biggest challenge of e-commerce is to make customers trust their Website, because that is essentially the most important aspect of online business. It is difficult from consumers “trust” a website that carries fake products. Camtoptech.com then gradually moves from the low quality products to brand name products and continuously doing Facebook and YouTube marketing. The second issue is the lack of knowledge of the shoppers. As agriculture based society, Cambodia has large body of population that is illiterate. To promote the brand name products, customers need to have knowledge on what they are buying. They need to be educated. Thus the website owner does Facebook and YouTube marketing and that helps customers make purchase decisions. The products are delivered by local logistics system or by bus, one of the important transportation connect major cities such as Phnom Penh and provinces. Customers pay by cash and third party transaction is to be adopted in near future. To reward the community, the Camtoptec owner who one of few people knows well in Facebook marketing. He runs Facebook marketing workshops on a daily basis to educate local people who are interested in online marketing. One the day we interview him, there are approximately 20 people who are from business of all kinds, in the workshop.
Through the lens of media dependency theory, we observe aspects that is unique to e-commerce and social media use in developing and developed countries. Here we list few phenomena: High Dependency on Big US Players, Demand on Services and Knowledge, Information quality and Contents, Identical Business Model and Revenue Model with US e-commerce websites, Undiversified use environment, undeveloped E-Commerce environment, E-service as a mean of marketing, and law and regulation to be ready.

1. **High Dependency on Big US Players:**
   In our interview, local business owner mentioned that “everyone starts with Facebook”, implying that Facebook is the only way of Internet marketing. The Little fashion CIO also mentioned “either you depend on Apple, Google, or Facebook. If you go the apps, you rely on Google Play and Apple store. Well we are small company, so we also live within the big ecosystem that big companies created.” A good question to ask is “can e-commerce activities depend from those big players? The answer seems quite apparent that they have to reply Facebook because it is the only one social media that most of Cambodian use. It is also very interesting to see that social media—Facebook—means “Internet” to them, because of not much of choice of e-service available and used in Cambodia.

2. **Demand on Services and Knowledge:**
   Observing the current e-commerce development, Cambodia is making a slow progress in comparison with nearby countries such as Thailand and Singapore. The major reason was because of lacking resources, knowledge, and know-hows. From our interview with Camtoptec’s Facebook workshop, we found that attendees want to learning how to use Facebook to do social marketing but there not much resources available. She mentioned that “Facebook can help me to find clients for my real estate business, so I am here to learn.”

3. **Information Quality and Contents**
   Issue raised from media content, when Khmerload is one of the important media service providers; their content quality has to be improved, mentioned by a local business owner. The news sources are purchased from new agents. The user generated content also has problem for its quality in term of accuracy and appropriateness. No censorship as much as most of the mainstream western media, the quality of online media content is questionable. The local business owner mentioned that there are some parent guarded content occasionally appear in the Khmerload website that shall be improved and monitored. Currently there is no mechanism of digital content censorship.

4. **Identical Business Model and Revenue Model with US E-Commerce websites**
   From the three business case studies, we found that even local trained entrepreneurs, they learn experiences from US and Singapore. The business model and revenue model of Khmer24.com are identical to Craigslist and soon create a large user population. The owner mentioned that "We are
the Cambodia Craigslist, we run the online business nearly 10 years with a team of 10 computer specialists. Our clients are local business owners who spend budget on our banner ads..." With 99% Cambodia user population, users seems comfortable with services provided. No local accents are found in the website except the posts are in Cambodian language. The Little Fashion CEO was trained in US; getting the western influence, the website, payment system, and marketing approach is completely western.

5. Undiversified Use Environment: In Cambodia, Internet use is mainly with the smart phones. The very limited infrastructure allows users only have access to Internet with wireless network. This limited their operation of the Internet with a relatively small digital devise. A business owner mentions that Facebook is the most important electronic service available in Cambodia digital market:

"...we can subscribe Facebook only Internet service. With only 4-5 US dollars monthly fee, we can use Facebook and the Internet has no other websites for us to use. Facebook is the Internet; Internet is the Facebook..."

6. Undeveloped E-Commerce Environment: The Cambodia e-commerce has been developed under a grass-root approach. The Little Fashion initiated their business with some inexpensive clothes selling over the Facebook, the most inexpensive online platform for marketing and sales. Since the IT environment is yet well-established, the issue most e-commerce website cares the most such as security can be the least important with the Little fashion, the CIO said that:

"...I have to paid great attention to the system when we have just started our website, but now I can let my subordinates to take care of the transaction. As for security, we are not well-equipped for all possible approaches. For instance, if we set a strong passwords requirement, our website will become difficult to use. Our users will tend to forget the password so our website will become less popular."

7. E-service as a Mean of Marketing: Facebook is the only way of marketing online. Due to the product features, Facebook is a widely use e-service in Cambodia. It is a way to communicate with friends, families, and clients. For business owners who deliver state-of-art products and services. It is an online communication that they cannot do without. The local business owner who sells US brand high end stereos mentioned that he will shoot videos and post them on Facebook, to demonstrate the product features:

"...if you do not do marketing over the Facebook, customers just do not know so they won’t come to look for us....I post video that show my product functions and sometime I even throw my stereo speakers into water in the video to show that it is water proofed...my staff will explain the functions of the stereo over the Facebook video so we can get order from the online users....". A one hundred USD model is currently the best-selling item in his shop and with the Facebook marketing his business is growing stably in the market.

8. Law and Regulation to be Ready: Year after E-commerce in placed and Internet adoption, the Ministry of Commerce has started to draft law and regulation to manage and control the E-commerce activities. The draft is under developed in 2017 summer and to be passed soon. The government officer mentioned that they have an early version of Commerce law for Internet:

"...we currently are working on the law for Internet activities and the law has not yet officially announced and it soon will be publicized...the purpose of the law is to regulating transactions..."

Unlike most of Western countries, the law and regulations are in place much earlier stay alone with the development of e-commerce. In Cambodia, however, e-commerce law are in draft and yet released. The down side is that the customers get less protection of online transaction. If there is a legal issue, there is not rule to follow and to resolve disputes.

Discussion

Under the frog-leap approach, Cambodia quickly adopts the wireless network and the population of the Internet users increases in a short period of time. Wireless services are less costly in implementation, so the Internet is made available to users without high cost. This approach fits Cambodia’s economic environment where most of the population is under poverty line. The relatively less-complicated media
environment enables an easy to use and powerful e-service—Facebook—to be popular and create strong media effect in communication, marketing, and building social tie. Nevertheless, users rely too much on the IT standards built up by foreign countries and they will be hardly to remove the dependency of the IT standards given the society lack of the resources from private sectors and government supports.

Secondly, the contents offered by Facebook deeply influence how users communicate with each other. Facebook features are by default and unable to be personalized, as a result, users will have to follow the mental model of this e-service which is a completely a western invention. Other developing countries such as Asian countries Korea and Taiwan users have higher level of literacy so that software engineering can be localized without much impact by the western conceptualization on how an information service/system should looks like. In Cambodia, however, the media is completely developed by western business so that is another way of culture invention because the needs of communication is there and they have to adopt the services available and in affordable price. There is no way to have access to any of the e-service that is locally-grown.

Thirdly, being an emerging market, Cambodia displays a lot of opportunities. Foreign investments have started to develop this virgin land of Internet service. In particular few foreign investments participate the E-commerce but yet have successful outcome like the Little Fashion Website. This is because the commerce in Cambodia replies very much on connection and social ties. Without local supports, businesses are hardly able to tackle the market. The e-commerce market is not open for foreign investment and the local resources is scarce to support the development of e-commerce. These impede Cambodia's business environment continue to grow to be friendly to big business for e-commerce.

With semi-structured interviews, we can capture only few Internet users’ experiences. This is a limitation of our study. However, the merits of using qualitative approach of data collection lie in the depth of understanding the use behaviors and we are able to identify inherit issues/problems. These issues and problems may be hard to be observed with quantitative approach. Nevertheless, we encourage future study shall use a quantitative approach to collect a larger size of responses. Thus, the use behaviors can be described across different age, gender, and social-economic status.

In a unique environment like Cambodia, there are some unintended consequences of Internet use are developed. Due to the limited time and resources, we are not able to systematically examine these consequences. Future study may also focus on how Internet is being used differently from developed/developing countries. In particular, how their e-commerce activities is started up with a grass-root approach is a very interesting research topic. Will all those issue such as trust, payment system, and security are equally important as the success of e-commerce in developed/developing countries? The success stories of our three business cases: the Little Fashion, Khmer24, and Camtoptec are inspiring. They stands for the initiatives that Cambodia connect to global digital economy. How these online business can sustain in digital economy is also an interesting issue to be observed.

Conclusion

We apply media dependency theory to observe the e-commerce and social use in Cambodia. Unstructured interviews were conducted with local Cambodia business owners, e-commerce Website owners, a Facebook workshop attendee, and a government officer. We found that Cambodia is highly dependent on the western Internet standards and e-services. Facebook alone is widely adopted and this is very unique to western countries where a variety of e-services available to choose. The dependency may produce a profound effect to Cambodia users and this shall continuously be observed for an in-depth understanding of the uniqueness of Internet use in a less developed country such as Cambodia.

The issue of bringing digital divide continue to be important to Cambodians. Furthermore, digital literacy and premium e-services are also on demand for this country that has the youngest population in the world. The young generation can quickly adopt new technology with least efforts; they will have high demand to catch up what is happening in the western world. Observing e-commerce and social media use is a start point to call for more efforts to bridging not only the digital divide but also the information inequalities.

Through the interviews, we sense that Cambodia is developing quickly in the use of IT, however, it also highly relies on foreign resources to build up the IT structures. Thus, the Internet is highly depended
on features that have been developed by foreign e-service providers such as Facebook. Facebook fulfills the needs of the users so they develop dependency over Facebook, even though contents are generated by Cambodian user themselves. From the use, we can see how Cambodian user are relying on what is there from western world and the direction is not reversible.

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