



**National University of
Science and Technology**

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FACULTY OF COMMERCE

BUSINESS MANAEMENT DEPARTMENT

**AN ASSESMENT OF THE IMPACT OF E-COMMERCE ON THE
MARKETING ACTIVITIES OF SMEs IN ZIMBABWE**

By

CHIRIKUUTSI SHINGIRAI STEPHEN

N006 462D

SUPERVISED BY Mrs.J. MWENJE.

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ABSTRACT

There has been an increasing interest in the area of electronic commerce and more and more organisations transact business electronically. Today it is mostly large organisations and the public sector that utilise e-commerce. Small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) have not adopted e-commerce to the same extent, even though new, simpler and more affordable techniques for e-commerce have been introduced. The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the impact of e-commerce on the marketing activities of SMEs in Zimbabwe, by describing the factors that affect the adoption of electronic e-commerce in SMEs and how adoption of electronic commerce can be facilitated. In order to provide understanding of the subject, a survey of the impact of e-commerce on marketing activities of SMEs in Zimbabwe was carried out. The SMEs studied were: randomly and conveniently sampled in selected cities and towns in Zimbabwe. The SMEs selected were in the retail, property, tourism and transport sectors. Also 50 customers were sampled for questioning. Results were analysed and discussed basing on the objectives of the research which are identifying framework that helps SMEs evaluate the strategic use of e-commerce as well as guiding the adoption process in Zimbabwe, an assessment of e-commerce application and post adoption experiences in different sectors of Zimbabwean SMEs, and identification of the Success Critical Factors of the marketing activities of SMEs. The findings of this research indicate that there are several benefits that have resulted from the adoption of e-commerce in SMEs. Increased efficiency and effectiveness are considered to be important benefits for e-commerce adoption in SMEs. Furthermore, the SMEs perceive that adoption of e-commerce can be beneficial, and lead to reduces transport costs, improves brand building as well as impact on business processes, strategy formulation and relationships. The innovativeness of the owner/manager was also found to influence adoption of e-commerce. The results from this study also indicate that technologically, financial and educational constraints are also hindering the SMEs full enjoyment of the benefits of adopting e-commerce. However, technological and financial assistance and coercive methods are considered to facilitate adoption of e-commerce SMEs.