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# Dave CHAFFEY, Digital Business and E-commerce Management: Strategy, Implementation and Practice

Carmen Bălan

*Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania*

Digital business is witnessing a tremendous evolution. New technologies shake the traditional business models and shape innovation opportunities. Currently, every business unit may become a technology startup, at the same time as e-commerce extends the boundaries of the consumer behavior in the omnichannel context.

The economic and technological environment challenges companies to rethink their competitive edge by turning into value the potential of digital tools and of electronic commerce. Thorough knowledge and expertise are absolutely necessary for the effectiveness of every digital endeavor. In this respect, a valuable contribution is brought by Dave Chaffey's book, "Digital Business and E-commerce Management: Strategy, Implementation and Practice", whose sixth edition was published by Pearson Education in 2014.

The Chartered Institute of Marketing – a prominent international organization established in the United Kingdom – recognized Dave Chaffey as one of the 50 marketing gurus worldwide who have helped shape the future of marketing in 2004. Chaffey has practical experience in the field of digital business. His company, Smart Insights, is focused on online publishing and web analytics. Chaffey is also the author of five best-selling books on various topics regarding digital business. His books target a wide international audience, as several titles are also available in Chinese, Dutch, German, Italian and Serbian.

The key management decisions to be made by companies in order to drive their change based on digital technologies and media represent the central



**Pearson Education, 2014, 712 pages,  
ISBN 978-0-273-78654-2 print;  
ISBN 978-0-273-78657-3 - PDF;  
ISBN 978-0-273-78655-9 - eText**

Correspondence:  
Carmen Bălan  
[carmen.balan@mk.ase.ro](mailto:carmen.balan@mk.ase.ro)

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theme of the book. According to Dave Chaffey, digital business describes “*how companies apply digital technology and media to improve the competitiveness of their organization through optimizing internal processes with online and traditional channels to market and supply*” (p. 11). Electronic commerce (e-commerce) is defined as “*all electronically mediated information exchanges between an organization and its external stakeholders*” (p. 12). The author underlines that e-commerce is narrower in scope than digital business. The sixth edition brings a terminology shift compared to the previous editions. To reflect the current state of industry and research, the term digital business replaces the term e-business which was firstly coined by IBM (“*as a transformation of key business processes through the use of Internet technologies*” (p. 13)) in 1997. From the PC era of late 1970s, the world advanced towards the intelligent Web, respectively Web 4.0, at the end of the present decade. The new digital technologies and media will have a disruptive and transformational impact on businesses.

There is a logical flow of the parts and chapters. Along the 712 pages of the book, the readers progress from the conceptual dimensions of digital business and e-commerce to the practical perspective which is of utmost importance for their effective implementation.

The structure of the book includes three major parts. The first part is entitled “Introduction” and lays the foundation of the topics addressed. The four chapters of this part refer to the following aspects: the essence of the concepts of digital business and e-commerce; the marketplace analysis for e-commerce; the management of the digital business infrastructure; and the e-environment. This part provides readers with clarifications relative to the basic concepts and reviews different interpretations of the terms.

The second part focuses on “Strategy and applications”. This core part of the book deals with five major areas: digital business strategy; supply chain management; e-procurement; digital marketing; and customer relationship management. The second part allows a two-fold perspective on the use of electronic communication, respectively the buying perspective and the selling perspective of e-commerce. The buy-side of e-commerce consists in the transactions between the organization and its suppliers and other partners. The sell-side includes all the transactions between the organization and its customers.

The final part of the book is “Implementation”. It encompasses three main areas: change management; analysis and design for digital technology projects; and digital business service implementation and optimization. This part contributes largely to the practical value and relevance of the book.

This volume is a must-read for every marketer aiming to harness the power of the digital tools. The book has several strong points that deserve attention.

Firstly, the book addresses two hot topics, respectively digital business and e-commerce. They are both part of our professional and individual lives. Those who ignore the latest trends in these fields take huge risks in the short and the long run.

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Secondly, the book mirrors the expertise of the author who is a leading authority in the field. Dave Chaffey simultaneously wears several “hats”, being businessperson, independent Internet marketing trainer and consultant.

Thirdly, it approaches the topic of digital business and e-commerce from a managerial perspective. The sub-title of this book is “Strategy, implementation and practice”. Thus, the author targets two major segments of readers. The former consists of university readers. Students will certainly be attracted by the practical aspects of the topics addressed. The latter is represented by company managers interested to discover the secrets of designing and implementing effective digital and e-commerce strategies.

Fourthly, this book provides quality and updated information on the studied topics. The continued interest of readers both from the academic and the business environments is proven by the fact that the reputable publishing house Pearson has printed the sixth edition of this book that was first launched in 2002. Each new edition brought updated information in line with latest trends and best practices.

Finally, the book is an excellent practice tool due to the cases and exercises it incorporates. The case studies refer to companies which are either benchmarks or true failures in the digital environment. Positive examples are eBay, Google, Amazon, as well as Debenhams, Argos, Shell Chemicals, EasyJet, Dell, Tesco and Jansen-Cilag. As a digital blunder example, the book presents the case of the clothing retailer Boo.com which was considered by the Financial Times “Europe’s first big Internet casualty”.

This best-seller of Dave Chaffey is an engaging, up-to-date and authoritative account of digital strategies that are a driver of business competitiveness. Both a learning tool and a guide for practitioners, the book is a value maximizer.