

The Impact of Perceived Quality of Web Information Sources on the Use of Competitive Information by Decision Makers

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Development of the web has stimulated the creation of a new world of accessible and available information sources. This study explores the impact of perceived quality of web information sources upon the use of competitive information by decision makers. The theoretical basis of the study combines KBV theory and Marketing use Knowledge Model.

The research method was questionnaire based; the study population consisted of 107 decision makers, representing 96 Israeli companies. The study shows that the perceived quality of web information sources is quite high. The perceived quality of web information sources had a weak positive impact on the Competitive Advantage of the firm, and a weak positive impact on two action oriented types of uses: Instrumental Congruous and Symbolic Positive. These facts point to the importance of web competitive information. It was also found that some of the web information sources (service providers) were not familiar to almost a third of the respondents.

This study, being the first of its kind, contributes to the expansion of the Marketing use Knowledge Model and adds a strategic element to KBV theory. The study also has a practical contribution: it may assist decision makers in firms to become more familiar with the world of competitive information sources on the web and its potential uses. The research tool, together with the conclusions of this study, may be useful for high-level decision makers in firms which intend to examine the need for enlargement of, or for the establishment of a specialized dedicated unit in this field.