

An Empirical Analysis of Emerging Trends of E-Services (A Case Study of Indian Railways)

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Abstract: E- Services referred as online services accessible via net and widely used for online purchasing of various services and products. E- Services provide support to the business in both private and public sector organization. It has been explored by the researchers that E- Services are cost effective and convenient mode of consumer services in Indian Railways. However it has been found that Indian railway's online services are effective only for those consumers, who are extremely active in online communication. E-services on the website of Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) become the fastest growing e- commerce web application in recent scenario that provide boom in the division of online money transactions.

This paper provides a holistic view of the emerging trends in the Indian Railways to promote the adoption of e marketing and e -services. The research paper also focus on the technological developments in Indian Railways. Although government organisations also endow support to maintain and increase the level of e- services in Indian railways. Indian Railways recently launched the e- ticketing services where e-booking of tickets have been done through Passenger Reservation System (PRS) of Indian Railway's web site. Indian Railways also introduced various emerging e-services for passengers as e-catering and e-commerce.

Through Indian railways passengers would be able to order fast food and meal of their choice from the popular eating joints such as Dominos, Pizza corners. For these services travellers have to book their menu through e-catering services on IRCTC website before start of their journey. These e-catering of Indian railways also offers to specify the station where the customer likes to have their food. The research paper analysis and study shows that customer base is increasing day by day, novel prospect still coming and Indian railways have been moving in the right 'Digital Direction'.

Keywords: E- Services, Online Marketing, Trends, Indian Railways

1. INTRODUCTION

E-services can be defined as , "buying and selling of goods and

services through electronic technology. It is commonly known as e-commerce also. Many business houses are now indulging in e-commerce industry. Now consumers interact with firm from 'screen to face'. E- services are mainly refer to marketing, selling , conducting business over the internet.

Indian railway is one of the largest rail networks in the world and playing a major role in social and economic growth of the country. Now a day's train tickets have been booked through the website of Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation and also through the mobile phones with the help of GPRS or SMS system in it. This research paper examines the different trends of e-services in Indian Railways.

2. IMPORTANCE AND ADVANTAGES OF E-SERVICES

- E-shops and e-services centres are open 24 hours.
- It is very easy to compare the prices and quality of goods by using e-shopping tools.
- No need to wait in long queue at checkout counters.
- Time consuming as one can book his/her order on mobile or from workplace while doing work on computer.

3. DISADVANTAGES IN E-SERVICES

Besides many advantages there are some disadvantages of e-services. They are -

- There must be chances of fraud in e-services.
- Slow internet speed.
- There must possibility of interference in privacy and this will reduce internet utilization.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- Kirti Lalwani [1] in her study "E-Commerce – A key towards Automation" reveals that India is showing tremendous growth in the e-commerce. The presence of social media and smart phones makes e-commerce more attractive and convenient mode of shopping and purchasing online.
- Pooja Jain [2] in their study "Measurement of E-services quality. An Empirical study on online Railway Ticket

Reservation Website Services”, observed that there are four core e-services quality dimensions. They are well-organized, contains Responsiveness, Privacy and security and Reliability.

- Vijetha S. Shetty [3] reveals that IRCTC is the proved to be a pride and joy of the Indian Railway. In his study he examines that online reservation system requires special emphasis on features like online information system design, design of railway website and the network availability for online booking system.

4. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Although the technology is growing rapidly and e-commerce is become the most convenient way of online shopping but still there is a need of further development in this field. This paper discusses about the role of e-commerce or online services in Indian railways and describes how passengers of Indian railway benefited by its passenger reservation system.

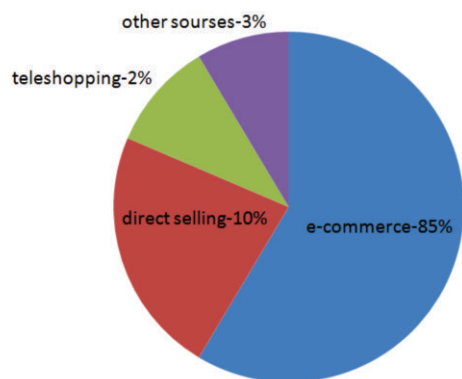
5. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

- To study the role of e-commerce in India.
- To determine various e-services provided by IRCTC.
- To observes the passengers behaviour towards Indian railway online services.

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research paper is descriptive type and is based on secondary data that are collected from different published articles, journals and websites. The data shows that e-services have been growing rapidly in Indian market. The ratio of e-commerce market is about 85%.

e-commerce market in india



7. CONCEPT OF E-SERVICES

E-services are the services provided through internet. In short e-

services are the online services where almost all the transactions were done online. For example, buying, selling, payment, marketing etc. in today’s, world where technology become the main mode of buying and selling of goods and services Mobile commerce takes birth where almost all the business and transactions are done with the help of mobile phones. Traditional online and offline business are now handled on mobile with high speed internet on mobile phones. And it is also become easy to asses nay business with the help of various applications on mobile. Today e-services have become the integral part of Indian society. Any goods and services are now provided on different websites. Some common e-services are following:

1. Financial services: These services are related to insurance ad online transaction of bills. Filling of return, buying and selling of shares etc.

2. Online travelling: Booking of online tickets of trains, airlines, hotel booking travelling insurance etc.

3. E-tailing: In this online purchasing of goods like kitchen appliances, toys gift items etc;

4. Online jobs: Now-a-day’s jobs are available in each and every sector. Online applications are demanded and also online interviews are conducted to recruit any personal. Job portals like www.monster.com, and www.naukri.com are providing suitable jobs to job seekers.

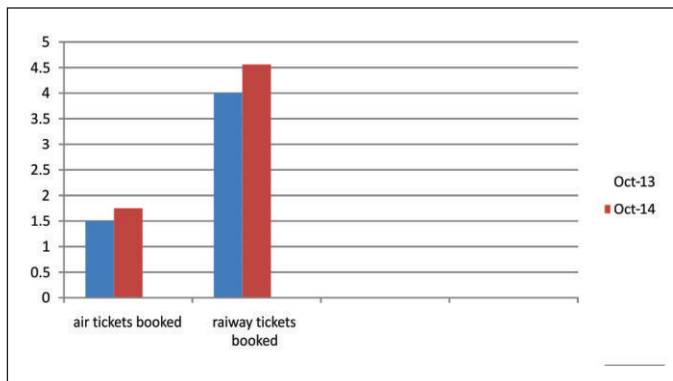
5. Online matrimony: jeevansathi.com, shaadi.com are some of the well known websites that helps an individual to search a suitable match of their cast and region.

6. Net banking: Now customers can pay their bill online with the help of net banking. They need not to visit the bank every time they need money. Now with help of ATMs and online transactions of bill one can pay through their ATM card or credit cards from anywhere in world.

7. Other online services are online food delivery, booking of online tickets of movies, cars , online games, online purchasing of home appliances and many more.

8. EMERGING TREND OF E-SERVICES IN INDIAN RAILWAYS

Indian railways (IR), the largest rail network in Asia and second largest in world under one management. It is the largest employment generation sector of India also a largest contributor of e-services in India. With Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) online booking of tickets and other online services in IR are blooming high. It has been found that after launching e-ticketing there is a increase in booking of railway tickets in comparison of air tickets.



In recent years, IR has undertaken several initiatives to upgrade its infrastructure and quality of services. Indian Railway is a pioneer of internet-based rail tickets where tickets are booked online through mobile phones. This online booking system helps passengers to book their tickets from their home or from workplace. There is no need of standing in long queues at booking counters. Bookings are open 24/7. It saves both time and money for passengers. IRCTC also adopted technologies of the future. Now it has introduced e-wallet options also. Almost 10,000 tickets are booked per day on IRCTC website. Indian railway also introduced various emerging e-services for passengers such as e-catering and e-commerce. Now Indian Railway passengers would be able to order fast food and meals of their choice from popular eating joints such as Dominos, Pizza Huts, Food Panda. To use these services, passengers have to book their meals through e-catering services on IRCTC websites before they start their journey. Their orders are placed at the desired station where they want their meal. So, in this way IR has been moving in the 'Digital Direction'.

9. FINDINGS

- This research paper finds that now in India e-services are flourishing very positively.
- Now almost all Indian organisations and sectors whether it is public or private sector are providing online services to their customers.
- Indian Railway is one of the biggest examples of online service providers in the country with its online ticketing and other online services.

10. CONCLUSION

In the present world of Information Technology where consumers are well educated and techno-friendly they want to save their time and they adopt smart ways to purchase their products. E-services are the best option for these customers. It is very common that people travel from one place to another and among various transport modes, rail transport is convenient and cost-effective. IRCTC offers e-tickets on online booking of tickets to its passengers and helps them to save their time of buying tickets from ticket counters. Besides this IRCTC offers various e-services to benefit its passengers while travelling. Railways also take necessary steps to create awareness among passengers about the usage of e-services.

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