

Public Abstract

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Title: Penetration of Innovation: Taming the Unexplored Interactions between Information, Knowledge and Persuasion in the Innovation-Decision Model.

From the ultimate model of hybrid automobiles to the discovery of a new celestial body, we constantly come in contact with new products or ideas. While innovations have represented the fuel for the evolution of our societal system, an intimate approach towards the understanding of how people accept new ideas and products and how these diffuse within the social group have only been studied starting the mid 1950's. The present research work proposes a new theoretical model for the intimate relationships between information source types, knowledge acquisition and the persuasive effect of delivered information on the decision to adopt or reject an innovation. Qualitative research on a health-related issue (acceptance of colonoscopy as screening method for colon cancer) combined with quantitative research about acceptance of a technological innovation (new video telephone), confirmed the viability of the assumptions of the theoretical model. The current research generates valuable information regarding the influence of media channels and especially new electronic media as a major channel for the delivery of information on innovations, and provides communication scholars with a new arsenal of tools for the study of the innovation-decision process.