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## Editorial

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Welcome to this new edition of the *IJTMkt*. Academics and practitioners alike, we all know that the diffusion rate of a new technology product or service is very often a key determinant of performance in the marketing of technology solutions. In this issue, the five following papers bring some fresh viewpoints about the drivers that contribute to the adoption of technology based innovation.

The first article entitled ‘Conceptualising the influence of lead users and opinion leaders on accelerating the rate of innovation diffusion’ brings a new perspective on the different research studies that have theoretically and empirically investigated the influence of lead users on the innovation process. Today, it is widely acknowledged that a lead-user innovation approach will help to reduce the risk of failure associated with introducing new products to the market. However, there are only limited research studies that comprehensively evaluated the influence of lead users’ innovations on the rate of diffusion. This paper introduces an integrative model of innovation diffusion that evaluates lead users’ influence on accelerating rate of diffusion through highlighting the link with opinion leadership as well as innovation attributes. One of the managerial implications of this paper is to determine how the firm bridges the innovation gap in the marketplace. Is this gap going to be bridged by bringing mainstream and continues improvements in products and services as represented in annual modifications in features and product line extensions? Or, is this gap going to be bridged by bringing breakthroughs represented in leading-edge innovations to the market?

The second paper entitled ‘The impact of IT applications on customer satisfaction. some new perspectives in the supplier-retailer relationships’ explore one main driver of the adoption rate of a technology based product: the level of satisfaction that it brings to the customers. The article analyses the relationship between the customers perception about the IT intensity of use by its main provider and customer satisfaction with the provider’s IT solutions. It is based on the study of retailers working in different sectors.

The results allow for a number of management implications for supply chain management to be drawn such as, for the suppliers, the adaptation of technology to the

level of retailer's ICT investment and expected level of technological development. It paves the way for future research in the study of relationship value between retailers and suppliers and also the study of perceived value and relationship quality.

The third article entitled 'Optimising adoption of a single product in multi-segmented market using innovation diffusion model with consumer balking' explores the situation where potential customers are shying away for good from a product, a situation which is increasingly frequent with technology product. Changing consumer preference, negative word of mouth, better competitive strategy, modifications in technology and launch of next generation of the same product in the market, all those factors may influence the potential buyers' perception and expectation towards product up to the point where they may decide to 'balk' and not to purchase an innovative technology product. The article emphasises also the importance of a completely different category of customers: the 'repeat purchasers' whose actions are counterbalancing the ones from balking customers. The paper incorporates the effect of balking as well as repeat purchasing in order to formulate an optimal promotional effort so that the adoption of innovative product gets maximised. The resulting non-linear complex optimisation problem is solved using genetic algorithm and a numerical example is presented for illustrating the formulation and its solution.

The fourth paper entitled 'New product pricing strategies for network effects products: free products?' underlines the consequences of network effects on pricing strategy, a key determinant for product adoption. Actually, an increasing amount of technology products introduced today exhibit network effects, meaning that their usage value increases as more people adopt it. Contrary to traditional products, the pricing decisions for network effects products are influenced by whether creating a critical mass of users are important for the future success of the product. The paper shows that the consistency between product characteristics, objectives of product launch, and pricing objectives determines preferable introductory pricing strategies. Additionally, it demonstrates that although penetration pricing can be recommended in some cases, it is not suitable in all situations. Premium prices can be charged depending on the relative importance of intrinsic and extrinsic product value.

The final paper of this edition examines the 'Factors affecting success of innovation intermediaries of intellectual property assets in Taiwan'. Indeed, some intermediaries – private or public have a key role in the dissemination and the diffusion of new technology in emergent and non-mature markets. As, IP transaction is a complicated process involving a high degree of specialisation and knowledge, it often requires assistance from professional service providers like intermediaries. This article provides a clear description of the resources and capabilities associated with IP intermediaries. Its main findings suggest that networking with local industries, efficient seller-buyer match and transaction consultancy are considered as key success factors (KSFs) contributing to success of IP intermediaries.