

Chapter 10

Interpretations and Discussion of Key Findings

10.1 Introduction:

This chapter is concerned with the interpretation of the research findings as well as relating these findings to the literature addressing previous work within the field. The discussion is presented in three main stages in relation to the extents of the research which are: the adoption of E-Marketing, the impact of E-Marketing on marketing performance and the different forms, tools and levels of E-Marketing adoption.

10.2 E-Marketing adoption key findings:-

As discussed earlier (chapter nine – section 9.3), the investigation of the factors affecting the adoption of E-Marketing by SBEs had been conducted in four stages which are:

- Investigating the TAM and IDT model within the context of SBEs.
- The research primary framework (TAM and IDT extended by adding some SBE internal factors).
- The research secondary framework (TAM and IDT extended by adding some SBE internal and external factors).
- Structure equation model (to investigate the different direct and indirect relationships among TAM and IDT related factors, the SBE internal and external factors).

Finding 1: TAM and IDT model:-

Based on 114 usable questionnaires from a mail out of 391 questionnaires with a response rate of 32.38% collected from UK industrial and trading SBEs, TAM and IDT as the most effective theories in predicting and explaining the use and adoption of new technologies were tested from an E-Marketing and small businesses context (chapter nine – section 9.3.1). Within this context and based on the findings of the

study, the TAM and IDT related factors (the SBE perceived ease of use, perceived relative advantage and perceived compatibility) were found to have a positive impact and play an important role in E-Marketing adoption by UK industrial and trading SBEs. On one hand, this is consistent with the findings of Jie, Peiji and Jiaming (2007), Yi et al (2006), Chen, Gillenson and Sherrell (2002) and (2004), Wu and Wang (2005), Looi (2004) and Lertwongsatien and Wongpinunwatana (2003) who found that combining TAM and IDT have a positive impact on the adoption of new technologies. This is also consistent with the findings of previous researchers where perceived ease of use, perceived relative advantage and perceived compatibility were found to be the most important elements in the TAM and IDT models that can influence the adoption of new technological innovations (Moore and Benbasat, 1996; Karahanna and Straub, 1999; Moon and Kim 2001; Pavlou 2003; Eid, 2003; Van Slyke et al. 2004, Carter and Belanger, 2003 and Van Slyke, 2007).

Based on the data analysis and hypotheses testing results (see chapter 9 - section 9.3.1), there is significant relationship between E-Marketing adoption and the factors related to TAM and IDT. The model fit very well with Adjusted R^2 of 0.671 showing that 67.1% of the observed variability in E-Marketing adoption is explained by the three factors. The beta weights show that the highest effect on E-Marketing adoption occurred by perceived relative advantage ($B = 0.433$) followed by perceived ease of use ($B = 0.239$) and the lowest impact occurred by compatibility ($B = 0.217$). This result is different from that of Fenech (1998) who found that perceived relative advantage is inadequate as predictor of usage acceptance of World Wide Web, but is consistent with the findings of Eid (2003) who found that perceived relative advantage have the highest effect on the usage of the Internet by B2B companies as well as the findings of Dembla, Palvia and Krishnan (2007), Al-Qirim (2007), Al-Qirim (2006), Stockdale and Standing (2006), Kaynak, Tatoglu and Kula (2005), Looi (2004), Cooper and Zmud (1990), Davis (1989), Ghorab (1997), Igarria et al. (1997), Lin and Lu (2000), Raymond, (2001) and Teo et al. (1999) who found that relative advantage is significantly more strongly linked to Internet and E-Commerce usage than all other factors.

In another words, in line with research into large companies E-Marketing adoption by SBEs is significantly affected by the SBEs perception of E-Marketing

relative advantage (usefulness), ease of use and compatibility. Actually the regression analysis shows that perceived relative advantage in terms of performance, productivity, speed, quality, easiness of conducting the job, effectiveness on the job and control over work has the highest most significant effect on E-Marketing adoption by SBEs. This reflects that E-Marketing relative advantage is the main factor affecting the adoption of E-Marketing by SBEs.

On the other hand, perceived ease of use is the second most important factor affecting the adoption of E-Marketing by the research SBEs. In another words, SBEs owners and/or marketing managers are more likely to adopt E-Marketing if they perceived or felt that E-Marketing is easy to use in conducting marketing activities. This goes in line with the findings of Grandon and Pearson (2003) and Moon and Kim (2001) who found that perceived ease of use has a stronger effect on Internet usage and E-Commerce adoption. In another words, E-Marketing adoption by SBEs is significantly affected by the SBEs perception of E-Marketing ease of use. In point of fact the regression analysis shows that perceived ease of use in terms of clearness, understand-ability, easiness of use, easiness of learning and easiness of achieving the job has the second highest significant effect on E-Marketing adoption by SBEs. This reflects that E-Marketing ease of use is one of the main factors affecting the adoption of E-Marketing by SBEs.

Although perceived compatibility is one of the factors affecting the adoption of E-Marketing by SBEs, it is not the main factor affecting this adoption. This result is consistent with the findings of Seyal and Abd Rahman (2003) who found that perceived compatibility is one of the main determinants of E-Commerce adoption by SBEs in Brunei Darussalam. This is also consistent with the findings of Al-Qirim (2007), Al-Qirim (2006), Stockdale and Standing (2006) and Lertwongsatien and Wongpinunwatana (2003).

Finding 2: The research primary framework (TAM and IDT extended by adding some SBE internal factors):-

The TAM and IDT related factors model (tested in the first stage) was extended by adding some SBE internal factors (namely the SBE owner skills and support, available resources of the SBE, the SBE organisational culture, type of

products produced by the SBE, international orientation of the SBE and the SBE size) to achieve a better understanding about the most important factors affecting the adoption of E-Marketing by SBEs as well as increasing the ability of the TAM and IDT combined model to predict the adoption of E-Marketing by SBEs. The resulted framework was examined within the context of SBEs to investigate its impact on E-Marketing adoption by SBEs.

This framework illustrate that not all the factors have an impact on E-Marketing adoption. Out of nine factors included in the framework only five factors were found to have an impact on the adoption of E-Marketing. These factors are:-

- SBE owner skills.
- Relative advantage.
- SBE organisational culture.
- Ease of use.
- Compatibility.

Based on the data analysis and hypotheses testing results (see chapter nine), there is significant relationship between E-Marketing adoption and the factors related to TAM and IDT as well as some of the SBE internal factors. The model fit very well with Adjusted R^2 of 0.691 showing that 69.1% of the observed variability in E-Marketing adoption is explained by the framework variables. The beta weights show that the highest effect on E-Marketing adoption occurred by the SBE owner skills and support (B= 0.403) followed by perceived relative advantage (B= 0.351), SBE organisational culture (B= 0.275), perceived ease of use (B= 0.224) and the lowest impact occurred by compatibility (B= 0.181).

Accordingly, the adoption of E-Marketing by SBEs is dependent on the SBE owner skills and support. This is consistent with the findings of Elliott and Boshoff (2005), Lal (2005), Fillis, et al (2004a), Warren (2004), Seyal and Abd Rahman (2003), Scupola (2003) and Damaskopoulos and Evgeniou (2003) who found that the owner skills are very vital factor in adopting new technologies as well as the Internet. This is also in line with the findings of Lawson et al (2003) who found that low level of staff and owner skills and training is a barrier of E-commerce adoption by Australian SME's. Within the same line, the findings of Mehrtens, Cragg, and Mills

(2001) support this argument, they found that IT experience affect Internet adoption by SME's.

Perhaps it is not surprising to see that SBE owners have a considerable influence on the small business. It is more likely that most of the SBE decisions will be taken by the owners and in light of their experience and skills. Accordingly, it is highly expected that if the entrepreneur suffers from a lack of technological knowledge, legal knowledge, knowledge of economics, suitable data about the market, available chances for further education and/or training he/she will conduct his business in a traditional way without thinking in adopting any forms of E-Marketing. In contrast, a highly skilled and trained SBE owner is more likely to adopt E-Marketing and other new technologies and philosophies. On the other hand, the support of the SBE owner - as the top management within the SBE - will lead to successful E-Marketing adoption and implementation. This is consistent with the findings of Daniel and Myers (2000) who found that new IT systems will only succeed if there is support from senior management. This is also consistent with the findings of Mirchandani and Motwani (2001), Al-Qirim (2007), Lertwongsatien and Wongpinunwatana (2003), Seyal and Abd Rahman (2003), Tsao et al (2004) and Stylianou et al (2003) who found that top management support in the SBEs is one of the factors that will affect the adoption of new technologies by these SBEs. Moreover, this is also consistent with the findings of Peng, Trappey and Liu (2005), Sadowski, Maitland and van Dongen (2002) and Wu, Mahajan and Balasubramanian (2003) who found that managerial support is one of the factors that will affect the adoption of Internet and E-Commerce adoption by the Taiwan semiconductor industry, the use of the Internet and E-Business adoption respectively.

On the other hand, perceived relative advantage is the second most important factor affecting the adoption of E-Marketing by the research SBEs. Once again, this supports the findings of Dembla, Palvia and Krishnan (2007), Al-Qirim (2007), Al-Qirim (2006), Stockdale and Standing (2006), Kaynak, Tatoglu and Kula (2005) and Looi (2004). It is notable that although the investigation of the first model (TAM and IDT) showed that perceived relative advantage is the most important factor affecting the adoption of E-Marketing by the research SBEs, expanding the model by adding some SBE internal related factors resulted in the emerge of the SBE owner skills and

support as the most important factor affecting the adoption of E-Marketing. This finding reinforces the arguments of this research that an expansion of the TAM and IDT models will strengthen the models ability to predict the adoption of E-Marketing by SBEs.

Moreover, by comparing the results of the two models (TAM and IDT model and the primary framework) it is found that they have different levels of explanation for the variation in E-Marketing adoption by SBEs as reflected by the values of the Adjusted R^2 generated from these models. Within this context, the primary framework is the highest in explanation (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.691$) and has the smallest standard error of the estimate (0.33071) followed by the first model (TAM and IDT) with an Adjusted $R^2 = 0.671$ and a standard error of the estimate = 0.34142. Once again, these findings supports the arguments of this research that expanding the TAM and IDT models will lead to improvement of the ability of the models to predict the adoption of E-Marketing by SBEs. This is also consistent with the findings of Chau (1996), Igarria et al. (1995), Gefen and Straub (1997), Eid (2003), and Vijayasarathy (2004).

The third most important factor affecting the adoption of E-Marketing by the research SBEs was the SBE organisational culture. This is similar to the findings of Schillewaert, Rapp and Rapp (2007) who found that an enterprise that has a supportive organisational culture that is open to E-Marketing is more likely to adopt E-Marketing. The final two important factors affecting the adoption of E-Marketing arising from this study are perceived ease of use and compatibility (which has the lowest impact). Once again, compatibility appears to be the lowest factor affecting the adoption of E-Marketing following perceived ease of use as a more important factor affecting this adoption.

Surprisingly, the availability of resources did not significantly affect the adoption of E-Marketing by the research SBEs. This is in contrast with previous researchers who recognised the accessibility and availability of sufficient resources as an important factor in adopting E-Marketing [Dembla, Palvia and Krishnan (2007), Warren (2004), Macgregor and Vrazlaic (2004), Tsao et al (2004), Zhu et al (2003), Doolin et al (2003a and 2003b), Lawson et. al. (2003), Kula and Tatoglu (2003), Damaskopoulos and Evgeniou (2003), Premkumar and Potter (1995), Paul (1996),

Kuan and Chau (2001), Mirchandani and Motwani (2001), Mehrtens et al (2001), Iacovou et al (1995), Martin and Matlay (2001), Dholakia and Kshetri (2004) and Chwelos et al (2001)] and can be related to the cost associated with the technology needed to adopt E-Marketing since it is becoming much less expensive than it has been in the past. Moreover, the impact of the factors related to the type of product, international orientation and size of SBE were not significant.

Although the impact of these factors was not significant, to support these findings the individual effect of each of these factors on the adoption of E-Marketing by SBEs was investigated through conducting simple regression analysis. This was mainly to determine the importance of each independent variable in relation with the dependent variable (E-Marketing adoption). Based on the analysis, SBE resources (as well as SBE international orientation) alone reveal that it has a significant positive linear relationship with E-Marketing adoption. This suggests that with the other eight variables in the multiple regression model, the impact of SBE resources and SBE international orientation on E-Marketing adoption was overshadowed. This is consistent with the findings of Kaynak, Tatoglu and Kula (2005) who found that the available SBE resources have an important impact on E-Commerce adoption by manufacturing SME's. This is also consistent with the findings of Lal (2005) who found that international orientation of the organisation is an important and significant factor in adopting advanced E-business technology.

Finding 3: The research secondary framework (TAM and IDT extended by adding some SBE internal and external factors):-

The primary research framework (tested in the second stage) was extended by adding some SBE external environmental factors (namely competitive pressures, government influence, cultural orientation towards E-Marketing by the SBE customers) to achieve a better understanding of the adoption of E-Marketing by SBEs as well as increasing the ability of the TAM and IDT combined model to predict the adoption of E-Marketing by SBEs. The resulted framework was examined within the context of SBEs to investigate its impact on E-Marketing adoption by SBEs.

The examination of the framework (the secondary framework) illustrated that not all the factors included in the framework have an impact on E-Marketing adoption.

Out of twelve factors included in the framework only five factors were found to have an impact on the adoption of E-Marketing. These factors are:-

- Relative Advantage.
- Compatibility.
- Ease of Use.
- Owner Skills.
- Cultural orientation towards E-Marketing.

Based on the data analysis and hypotheses testing results (see chapter nine), there is significant relationship between E-Marketing adoption and the factors related to TAM and IDT as well as some of the SBE internal and external factors. The model fit very well with Adjusted R^2 of 0.702 showing that 70.2 % of the observed variability in E-Marketing adoption is explained by the framework variables. The beta weights show that the highest effect on E-Marketing adoption occurred by relative advantage ($B= 0.318$) followed by compatibility ($B= 0.243$), ease of use ($B= 0.215$), SBE owner skills ($B= 0.156$) and finally cultural orientation towards E-Marketing ($B= 0.121$).

Accordingly, the adoption of E-Marketing by SBEs is dependent on TAM and IDT related factors (relative advantage, compatibility and ease of use), the SBE owner skills and cultural orientation towards E-Marketing by the SBE customers. Not surprisingly, perceived relative advantage, perceived compatibility and perceived ease of use continued to appear among the most important factors affecting the adoption of E-Marketing by SBEs. This is consistent with the findings of Dembla, Palvia and Krishnan (2007), Al-Qirim (2007), Al-Qirim (2006), Stockdale and Standing (2006), Kaynak, Tatoglu and Kula (2005), Looi (2004), Eid (2003), Lin and Lu (2000) and Raymond, (2001). Furthermore, the SBE owner skills and support appeared again as an important factor affecting the adoption of E-Marketing by SBEs. This is consistent with the findings of Elliott and Boshoff (2005), Lal (2005), Fillis, et al (2004), Warren (2004), Seyal and Abd Rahman (2003), Scupola (2003) and Damaskopoulos and Evgeniou (2003).

Finally, although cultural orientation towards E-Marketing by the SBE customers was the lowest factor in affecting the adoption of E-Marketing, this factor has a significant impact on E-Marketing adoption by SBEs. This is consistent with the

findings of Chan and Swatman (2000), Cronin (1996a), Cronin (1996b), Hofacker (2001), Kotabe et al (2000), Palumbo and Herbig (1998), Samiee (1998) and White (1997) who found that culture is one of the significant factors affecting the adoption and the successful usage of Internet marketing.

Surprisingly, cultural orientation towards E-Marketing was the only SBE external factor that appears to have a significant impact of E-Marketing adoption by SBEs. In contrast, competitive pressure and market trends as well as government influence did not have a significant impact of E-Marketing adoption. This result is different from that of Simmons et al (2007), Looi (2004), Doolin et al (2003a), Mehrtens, Cragg and Mills (2001), Dholakia and Kshetri (2004) and Sadowski et al (2002) who found that competitive pressure and market trends have an important impact on Internet marketing adoption. This is also different from that of Looi (2004) who found that government support has an impact on E-Commerce adoption among SME's in Brunei Darussalam. Moreover, this contrasts the findings of Day and Bens (2005) who found that firms adopting E-Marketing are likely to have competitive advantage and the desire of having this competitive advantage will direct the firm towards adopting E-Marketing.

Moreover, by comparing the results of the three models (TAM and IDT model, the research primary framework and the research secondary framework) it is found that the three models has different level of explanation for the variation in E-Marketing adoption by SBEs as can be seen in the value of the Adjusted R² generated from these models. Within this context, the third (secondary) framework (TAM, IDT, internal and external factors) was the highest in explanation followed by the second (primary) framework and the first framework (TAM and IDT factors) was the lowest in the level of explanation. Once again, these findings supports the arguments of this research that expanding the TAM and IDT models will lead to improvement of the ability of the models to predict the adoption of E-Marketing by SBEs. This is also consistent with the findings of Chau (1996), Igarria et al. (1995), Gefen and Straub (1997), Eid (2003), and Vijayarathy (2004).

Finding 4: The research fourth framework (Structure equation model):-

The factors affecting the adoption of E-Marketing differed among the TAM and IDT model, the primary and the secondary frameworks. Although each framework generated different factors, the three factors adopted from the TAM and IDT were proven to have an impact on E-Marketing adoption by SBEs within the three frameworks. Moreover, there is one factor that was found to be affecting the adoption of E-Marketing when it was used to expand the first framework through the primary and secondary frameworks. This factor is the SBE owner skills. Also cultural orientation towards E-Marketing was found to be affecting the adoption of E-Marketing when it was used to expand the first framework through the secondary framework.

Although the examination of the three frameworks proved that expanding the TAM and IDT models will improve in the ability of the models to predict the adoption of E-Marketing by SBEs, there is still a need to understand the different relationships among the TAM and IDT factors as well as the SBE internal factors and the SBE external environmental factors from the other side. Investigating such relationships will lead to a deeper understanding of the phenomena under investigation within this research. Based on the data analysis and hypotheses testing results (see chapter 9 – section 9.3.4), the SBE perceived ease of use, perceived relative advantage and perceived compatibility were consistently found to positively affect E-Marketing adoption by SBEs. The highest effect on E-Marketing adoption occurred by perceived relative advantage (standardised estimate = 0.330, $P < 0.001$) followed by the SBE perceived ease of use (standardised estimate = 0.192, $P < 0.001$) and the lowest impact occurred by compatibility (standardised estimate = 0.158, $P < 0.05$). These findings are almost typical to the results generated by the multiple regression model used to test the TAM and IDT combined model where perceived relative advantage had the highest impact on E-Marketing adoption followed by perceived ease of use and perceived compatibility respectively. This is not only consistent with the findings of a lot of researchers within the field (e.g. Dembla, Palvia and Krishnan, 2007; Al-Qirim, 2007; Al-Qirim, 2006; Stockdale and Standing, 2006; Kaynak, Tatoglu and Kula, 2005 and Looi, 2004), but also confirm the findings of this research.

Moreover, small business internal factors positively and significantly affected the SBE perceived ease of use (standardised estimate = 0.774, $P < 0.001$), relative advantage (standardised estimate = 0.922, $P < 0.001$) and compatibility (standardised estimate = 0.799, $P < 0.001$). Surprisingly, the small business external factors had insignificant positive impact on the SBE perceived ease of use (standardised estimate = 0.078, $P = 0.551$) and compatibility (standardised estimate = 0.107, $P = 0.417$). Also the small business external factors have insignificant negative impact on relative advantage (standardised estimate = -0.025, $P = 0.854$).

On the other hand, small business internal factors positively and significantly affected E-Marketing adoption both directly and indirectly (standardised estimate = 0.307, $P < 0.05$). This is consistent with the findings of Day and Bens (2005), Peng, Trappey and Liu (2005), Barwise and Farley (2005), Sultan and Rohm (2004), Pagani (2004), Simpson and Docherty (2004), Wu, Mahajan, and Balasubramanian (2003), Brady, Saren and Tzokas (2002), Dholakia and Kshetri (2004), Daniel, Wilson and Myers (2002) and Sadowski, Maitland and van-Dongen (2002) who found that internal factors have an important impact on new technologies and Internet adoption. Within this context, the indirect impact of the small business internal factors was more than its direct impact on E-Marketing adoption by the research SBEs. Surprisingly, the small business external factors had insignificant negative impact on E-Marketing adoption (standardised estimate = -0.082, $P = .268$) and had affected E-Marketing adoption both directly and indirectly. Within this context, while the small business external factors had a negative direct impact on E-Marketing adoption, it had a positive indirect impact on this adoption.

In another words, E-Marketing adoption by SBEs is significantly affected by the SBEs perception of E-Marketing relative advantage (usefulness), ease of use, compatibility as well as the small business internal factors (namely the SBE owner skills and support, available resources of the SBE, SBE organisational culture, SBE type of products, international orientation of the SBE and SBE size).

10.3 E-Marketing implementation key findings:-

The study aimed to explore the different aspects related to E-Marketing implementation by SBEs to gain a better understanding of the forms, levels and tools of E-Marketing implemented by SBEs. Within this respect, E-Marketing can be conducted depending on a number of forms. A detailed review of the literature illustrated that most researchers, scholars and practitioners agreed on three forms of conducting electronic business transaction namely: Business to Business (B2B), Business to Consumer (B2C) and Business to Government (B2G).

Small business enterprises within the study were using these three basic E-Marketing forms and based on the data analysis and hypotheses testing results (see chapter nine), B2B and B2C are the most commonly used E-Marketing forms by SBEs when implementing E-Marketing. Within this context, the majority of the research SBEs used Business to Business (B2B) either as a sole E-Marketing form or as a combined E-Marketing form with other forms (i.e. B2C and B2G). This is consistent with the findings of Goodley and Lauchlan (2000), Kesselyack (2000), Silverstein (2000) and Torris et al. (2000) who found that B2B is not only the largest proportion of the E-commerce market but also that B2B will acquire the majority of the predicted future growth. This result also goes in line with the findings of Chen (2001) who illustrated that B2B generates more revenue than B2C and for that is more popular than B2C. This can be both supported and justified by the benefits that business firms can acquire from B2B applications. It was also found that when implementing E-Marketing SBEs tend to use single (sole) E-Marketing form. Within this context, the majority of survey respondents (56.1 % of the total) used a single (sole) E-Marketing form to conduct E-Marketing activities.

On the other hand, E-Marketing can be implemented through many different tools or means, the most common tools used by most firms are Internet Marketing and E-mail Marketing followed by Mobile Marketing, Intranet Marketing and Extranet Marketing. All these E-Marketing tools were used by the research SBEs and based on the data analysis and hypotheses testing results (see chapter 9 – section 9.4.1.2), it was found that when implementing E-Marketing SBEs depend on more than one tool of E-Marketing tools. Within this context, all the research respondents (114 SBEs with a percentage of 100% of the total) used Internet Marketing as an E-Marketing tool. In addition 94.7 % of the respondents used E-Mail Marketing as an E-Marketing tool

and 36.8 % of the respondents used Mobile Marketing. Moreover, 97.3 % of these SBEs were using Internet Marketing as well as E-Mail Marketing as E-Marketing tools which indicate that Internet Marketing and E-Mail Marketing are the most commonly used E-Marketing tools by SBEs when implementing E-Marketing. This is consistent with the findings of Epsilon (2009), Greene (2009), Eid (2003), Eid et al (2002), Ghosh (1998), Lancioni et al (2000) and Poon and Swatman (1999a) who found that Internet marketing is the most commonly used tool for conducting marketing electronically.

Furthermore, it was found that all the research SBEs were implementing E-Marketing. The majority of these SBEs 47.37 % were implementing E-Marketing in medium level. On the other hand, about one third of the research respondents 34.21 % were implementing E-Marketing in a high level followed by 18.42 % of the research respondents with a low implementation level of E-Marketing.

10.4 E-Marketing impact on marketing performance key findings:-

One of the main aims of this research is to identify the impact of E-Marketing adoption by SBEs on the marketing performance of these enterprises. The perceived impact of E-Marketing adoption on the current and future marketing performance was indicated through some performance indicators namely gaining new sales, gaining new customers, increased profits, good customer relationships, reduction of sales costs, faster discovery of customer needs, greater customisation of products, new markets, fast communication with customers, increased customer satisfaction, developing new products, faster adaptability of customer needs, providing better service quality, increased market share and brand equity.

10.4.1 E-Marketing impact on current marketing performance key findings:-

Based on the data analysis and hypotheses testing results (see chapter nine – section 9.5.1), there is significant relationship between E-Marketing adoption and the current marketing performance for the research SBEs. The model fit well with Adjusted R² of 0.172 showing that 17.2 % of the observed variability in marketing performance is explained by E-Marketing adoption. This research found that the

means scores for all items (performance indicators) are in the upper half of the distribution, so that E-Marketing adoption is associated with gaining new sales (M = 3.9825), gaining new customers (M = 3.9561), increased profits (M = 3.9035), good customer relationships (M = 3.7719), reduction of sales costs (M = 3.5439), faster discovery of customer needs (M = 3.6053), greater customisation of products (M = 3.5088), new markets (M = 3.5439), fast communication with customers (M = 3.8421), increased customer satisfaction (M = 3.7368), developing new products (M = 3.7982), faster adaptability of customer needs (M = 3.5965), providing better service quality (M = 3.7281), increased market share (M = 3.6316) and brand equity (M = 3.4474).

Moreover, one-sample t-test was conducted to determine whether the observed means of current performance indicators are significantly different from the mid-point of the scale (3.00). The one sample t-test results found to be very significantly different from the mid-point 3.00 ($p < 0.001$ for all the performance indicators except for developing new products for which $p < 0.05$). This confirms that all the performance indicators for E-Marketing are in the positive side.

Accordingly, current marketing performance is dependent up on the adoption of E-Marketing by small businesses. This is consistent with the findings of Brodie et al (2007) who found a positive relationship between E-Marketing and performance. This is also consistent with the findings of Wu et al. (2003), Drennan and McColl-Kennedy (2003), Domke-Damonte and Levsen (2002), Khan and Motiwalla (2002) and Garbi (2002) who found a positive relationship between E-Business penetration and performance.

10.4.2 E-Marketing impact on future marketing performance key findings:-

Based on the data analysis and hypotheses testing results (see chapter 9 – section 9.5.2), there is significant relationship between E-Marketing adoption and the expected future marketing performance for the research SBEs. The model fit well with Adjusted R^2 of 0.261 showing that 26.1 % of the observed variability in future marketing performance is explained by E-Marketing adoption. This research found that the means scores for all items (performance indicators) are in the upper half of

the distribution, so that E-Marketing adoption is associated with gaining new sales (M = 4.3070), gaining new customers (M = 4.3333), increased profits (M = 4.2719), good customer relationships (M = 4.2018), reduction of sales costs (M = 3.9561), faster discovery of customer needs (M = 4.0263), greater customisation of products (M = 3.9912), new markets (M = 4.1754), fast communication with customers (M = 4.2632), increased customer satisfaction (M = 4.1140), developing new products (M = 4.0614), faster adaptability of customer needs (M = 4.1667), providing better service quality (M = 4.1930), increased market share (M = 4.0965) and brand equity (M = 3.8421).

Moreover, one-sample t-test was conducted to determine whether the observed means of future performance indicators are significantly different from the mid-point of the scale (3.00). The one sample t-test results found to be very significantly different from the mid-point 3.00 ($p < 0.001$ for all the performance indicators). This confirms that all the performance indicators for E-Marketing are in the positive side.

Accordingly, future marketing performance is dependent up on the adoption of E-Marketing by small businesses. This is consistent with the findings of Brodie et al (2007), Wu et al. (2003), Drennan and McColl-Kennedy (2003), Domke-Damonte and Levsen (2002), Khan and Motiwalla (2002) and Garbi (2002) who found a positive relationship between E-Business penetration, E-Marketing and firm performance.

10.5 Chapter summary:-

The research findings make a significant contribution to the accumulative body of knowledge of E-Marketing in general and E-Marketing adoption and the impact of this adoption on small businesses marketing performance in particular. To this end this chapter was devoted to discuss the interpretation of the research findings as well as relating these findings to the literature and previous work within the field. The discussion through out the chapter were structured in three main extents which are the adoption of E-Marketing, the different forms, tools and levels of E-Marketing adoption and the impact of E-Marketing on marketing performance.

The chapter started by discussing the findings related to the factors affecting the adoption of E-Marketing by SBEs. The findings illustrated that SBEs adopt E-Marketing based on the three innovation attributes identified by Davis (1989) and Rogers (1983) namely perceived relative advantage, perceived ease of use and perceived compatibility. The findings also proposed that the adoption of E-Marketing by SBEs is more dependent on the SBE internal factors. The highest impact on E-Marketing adoption by the research SBEs occurred by two SBE internal factors namely the SBE owner skills and support and the SBE organisational culture. On the other hand, only one factor related to the SBE external environment was found to have an impact of E-Marketing adoption by the research SBEs, this factor was the cultural orientation towards E-Marketing by the SBE customers.

Afterwards, the chapter discussed the findings related to the different aspects related to E-Marketing implementation by SBEs. Within this context, the findings related to the different forms, levels and tools of E-Marketing implemented by SBEs were discussed. The findings illustrated that SBEs within the study were using these three basic E-Marketing forms (namely B2B, B2C and B2G). It was found that B2B and B2C are the most commonly used E-Marketing forms by SBEs when implementing E-Marketing. The majority of the research SBEs used Business to Business (B2B) either as a sole E-Marketing form or as a combined E-Marketing form with other forms (i.e. B2C and B2G). It was also found that when implementing E-Marketing SBEs tend to use single (sole) E-Marketing form.

The findings also illustrated that when implementing E-Marketing SBEs depended on more than one tool of E-Marketing tools. The findings also indicated that Internet Marketing and E-Mail Marketing are the most commonly used E-Marketing tools by the UK SBEs and that the majority of these SBEs were implementing E-Marketing in medium level.

Finally, the research findings indicated that current and future marketing performance is dependent on the adoption of E-Marketing by small businesses. Based on these findings, the following chapter will discuss the research contribution to the accumulative knowledge in the field, the different academic and managerial implications of the study, the different limitations associated to it as well as suggestions and direction for future research.