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This is a copy of the author's accepted version of a paper subsequently published in the proceedings of the International Conference on Computer Science and Service System (CSSS 2012). IEEE, pp. 3549-3552. ISBN 9781467307192. It is available online at:

http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/Xplore/home.jsp

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# A Web-based hybrid system for blended electronic, mobile and social media marketing planning

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Abstract — A Web-based hybrid intelligent system, WebIntegrated (developed by the authors), for developing blended e-marketing, mobile marketing and social media marketing strategies is reported in this paper. The concepts, software system and associated elements or components are presented. A brief demonstration of the data entries and outputs are also provided.

Keywords - decision support system; fuzzy logic; knowledge automation expert system; marketing; e-marketing; mobile marketing; social media marketing

#### I. INTRODUCTION

The emergence and development of electronic, mobile and social media marketing are creating new opportunities and raising the issue of integration of marketing mix and strategies. The advance of ICT would make the combination and coordination of conventional, digital, mobile and social media marketing strategies and associated marketing mix into one holistic framework feasible. The powers of Web technologies, artificial intelligence, and decision support would enable decision-makers to fully exploit their potentials, make the right decisions and survive in the dynamic and uncertain market contexts. This paper reports a Web-based hybrid system in support of integrated marketing strategy formulation.

#### II. THE WEBINTEGRATED SYSTEM

On the basis of the concepts of systems and hybrid systems discussed by von Bertalanffy [15], Goonatilake and Khebbal [2], Hopgood [3], Li [6], Li & Li [7, 8, 9], we give the following definition for hybrid intelligent decision support systems on the Web or over the Internet:

"A Web-based or Internet-enabled system that is comprised of various interacting and interrelated functional elements and integrates the advantages or strengths of diverse techniques or technologies including one or more artificial intelligence techniques or technologies for the following

purposes: serving for specified objectives or functions; dealing with the different facets of a given problem; delivering analytical models; providing useful information; automating domain expertise; generating intelligent recommendations; and supporting human decision-making or problem-solving via the Internet, extranets or intranets."

WebIntegrated is a hybrid intelligent system that was designed by the authors to focus on and specifically support the conventional, digital, mobile and social media marketing aspects and dimensions of strategy formulation. In particular, the system aims to support: 1) simulating and assessing variables influencing and determining integrated marketing strategies, and 2) performing approximate reasoning under uncertainty and advising blended conventional, electronic, mobile and social media marketing strategy alternatives or options.

WebIntegrated was constructed on the basis of the client-server structure, with server-side coding, scripting, programming and software creation. The following open-source tools were employed in this project: MySQL (a Webbased relational database management system), PHP (Hypertext Preprocessor), JSON (JavaScript Object Notation), and HTML (HyperText Markup Language).

Following the mathematical, computational and knowledge automation framework proposed by S. Li and J.Z. Li [10, 11], the WebIntegrated system hybridises the powers and benefits of Web technology, online computer simulation, fuzzy logic, Web-based expert system knowledge automation and Web databases to assist managers in the process of mixed marketing strategy formulation. It has been designed to deliver enhanced support by incorporating the state-of-the art decision support and artificial intelligence techniques and utilising various marketing models.

A Web-enabled *Monte Carlo simulation module* is developed to represent and simulate the uncertainties and

variations in relation to the marketing variables or factors. This utilizes triangular probability distributions and the inverse function of a cumulative distribution of the triangular probability distribution. Fuzzy logic is programmed to symbolise and implement pertinent variables, and compute the grades of certainty for digital marketing factors using trapezoidal membership/compatibility functions for the variables considered. A knowledge base is constructed to apply "if ... then ..." rules and fuzzy rules for representing relevant conventional, electronic, mobile and social media marketing models, and relevant domain knowledge obtained from the literature. An inference element is designed to carry out forward chaining under uncertainty to generate digital marketing strategy alternatives with various levels of confidence. A Web-server database component is developed to store simulation results, and saves and retrieves the user's judgemental inputs and data entries. The Web-based user interface is coded to aid the dialogue between the user and the WebIntegrated system.

The electronic/digital marketing strategy knowledge was collected and synthesized on the basis of the literature. McDonald [18]'s four-box marketing strategy development matrix and Watson and Zinkhan [17]'s Internet strategy grid were adapted and extended by the authors to cover electronic marketing dimensions including expertise and guidelines from Varadarajan and Yadav [16], Sultan and Rohm [14], and Gay, harlesworth and Esen [1]. Expertise on e-marketing strategies for international markets was acquired from Sheth and Sharma [13]. Domain knowledge on mobile marketing strategies and mobile marketing mix was obtained from Leppaniemi and Karjaluoto [5]. The social media marketing knowledge were acquired from Kaplan and Haenlein [4] and Mangold and Faulds [12]. The authors have also created and developed a four-cell strategic grid/matrix for mobile marketing strategies with a logical linkage to Leppaniemi and Karjaluoto [5]'s guidelines.

### III. A DEMONSTRAION OF DATA ENTRIES AND SYSTEM OUTPUTS

In this section, we demonstrate the data entries and WebIntegrated outputs using screen copies for the software execution.

Figures 1-5 illustrate data entry screens for the variables affecting market attractiveness, competitive strengths, the needs for mobile marketing, available level of budget, social media marketing factors.

An external analytic hierarchy process (AHP) tool [7] can be employed to perform pair-wise comparisons and help judge which factors or variable are less or more important to decisions than others, and help determine the weights of relevant factors or variables.

Figure 6 displays part of the blended conventional, digital, mobile and social media marketing strategies with fuzzy logic-based certainty level. Figure 7 shows part of the mobile marketing strategies with a fuzzy logic-based level of confidence. Figure 8 demonstrates partial output from the social media model.

Enter a pessimistic, most likely and optimistic value fo previously saved inputs (if any) by clicking the "restore				
lote that this condition must hold: "Pessimistic value	" ≤ "Most likely valu	ue" ≤ "Optimistic valu	e".	
Factor	Pessimistic value	Most likely value	Optimistic value	
Market size	6	8	9	
Market growth rate	5	7	8	
Market stability (or vulnerability)	5	7.5	8.5	
Economic climate	3	4	5	
Industry profitability	5	6	7	
New technology Web/Internet, digital TV, mobile, wireless, social media)	8	9	10	
Customer empowerment and expectations	7	8	9	
Other factors	6	8	9	

Figure 1. A screen copy of data entries for marketing attractiveness

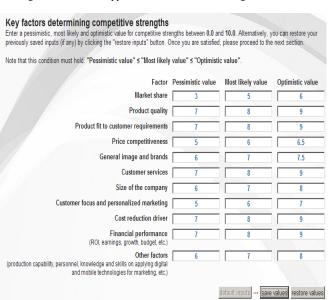


Figure 2. A screen snapshot for data inputs for competitive strengths

This paper was first published on the International Conference on Computer Science and Service System (CSSS 2012), 2012, Nanjing, China. The citation details: Li, Shuliang & Li, Jim Zheng (2012), "A Web-based hybrid system for blended electronic, mobile and social media marketing planning". In: IEEE Proceedings of the International Conference on Computer Science and Service System (CSSS 2012). IEEE, pp. 3549-3552. ISBN 9781467307192.

First dimension of factors affecting mobile mar	king decision-	making and mix	
The needs for mobile marketing Enter a value for each factor between 0.0 and 10.0, and a correspondin can restore previously saved or simulated inputs (if any) by clicking "te-		and 1.0 for mobile mark	keting. Alternatively, you
Note that, as a guideline, the sum of all the weights should be equal to please visit Factors & Criteria simulation before proceeding.	1.0. If you would like	to run a simulation to o	obtain inputs for below,
Factor	Value	Weight	Sum of weights
The needs for reacting to competitors' moves/manoeuvre	9	0.14286	1
The needs for customer retention	8	0.14286	(Sum guideline: 1.0)
The needs for attracting potential customers	10	0.14286	
The number of customers having mobile phones and smartphones	9	0.14286	
The intended coverage of mobile marketing	8	0.14286	
The intended intensity of mobile marketing	7	0.14286	
Social, legal, regulatory and ethical issues	7	0.14286	
	default inputs §a	ve values restore/load	

Figure 3. A screen example for data entries for mobile marketing variables

Available level of budget			
Enter a value for each factor between 0.0 and 10.0, and a correspon you can restore previously saved or simulated inputs (if any) by click			etitive strengths. Altern
lote that, as a quideline, the sum of all the weights should be equa	l to 1.0. If you wou	ld like to run a simulation	on to obtain inputs for b
lease visit Factors & Criteria simulation before proceeding.	you wou	and the same of th	
Factor	Value	Weight	Sum of weights
Factor Available budget level	Value 8	Weight 0.2	Sum of weights
			1
Available budget level	8	0.2	Sum of weights  1  (Sum guideline: 1.0
Available budget level Financial position/resources	7.5	0.2	1

Figure 4. A screen shot for available level of budget

	Social media marketing Please specify which of the following values for the belo	w variables are the most applicable to you
	Self-presentation or self-disclosure Low O High ©	Social presence or media richness C Low C Medium High
	Please proceed to the <b>next section</b> to view the results	for above choices.
Ei.	mura 5 A screen convitor making che	sign for the social modia marketing

Figure 5. A screen copy for making choice for the social media marketing

Invest for growth	
Level of confidence or degree of	certainty is 1
Market Share: Maintain or i retention.	ncrease dominance (McDonald, 1996). Compete more effectively and efficiently online; improve customer loyalty and
	expansion (McDonald, 1996). Adding value to existing products; providing more customised product design options and darajan & Yadav, 2009), developing digital products; direct and immediate delivery of digitizable through wireless service other information services.
	ng for share (McDonald, 1996). Online price transparency and comparison; changing price levels randomly to create tors. (Varadarajan & Yadav, 2009)
Promotion: Aggressive marke and software agents for prom	ting (McDonald, 1996). Short messaging service (SMS) (Sultan & Rohm, 2004). Extensive use of Web sites, e-mails, cookies otion.
	tion (McDonald, 1996). Extensively use multi-channels including Web sites, wireless, and mobile phones to achieve higher ner revenue and more frequent interaction with customers.
	search engine optimisation for digital marketing; Increase the position of the organisation and/or its product/services in anic results listings for selected keywords or phrases. (Chaffey et al., 2006)
	on online: Investment on e-CRM for acquisition and retention; extensive adoption of personalisation (contents, offers, etc.); les by spend, product and interest.; delivering customised content for the individual through Web pages, e-mail or push
	al marketing Web sites; marketing-led Web site design for achieving customer acquisition, retention and communication of haffey et al., 2006). Web site performance metrics (Sultan & Rohm, 2004); Web analytics for segmentation and positioning
marketing. Mobile advertising and others); promotions (brar	stions: Maximiae. Using mobile marketing as one of the key elements of the integrated marketing strategies, aggressive (Web-based mobile search and portal, breadcast including mobile VI, narrowcast, physical browsing, in gene advertising deed content, competitions, others including coupon/voucher; direct marketing (messaging including SMS, MMS, E-mall, arrivers, mobile commerce, market research, mobile community, etc.) (Leppaniemit & Karjalouto, 2008).
	ig social media as one of the key elements of the marketing mix. Social media tools: Virtual social worlds, virtual game, content communities, blogs, video sharing sites, collaborative projects, and more (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Mangold, &

Figure 6. An output screen shot for the extended McDonald strategy model



Figure 7. An output screen snapshot for the mobile marketing strategy model

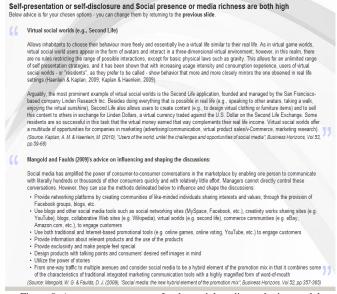


Figure 8. An output screen copy for the social media marketing model

#### VI. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this paper, we have introduced and described a Webenabled hybrid intelligent system, called WebIntegrated, for integrated conventional, electronic, mobile and social media marketing strategy formulation. The concepts, system elements and an illustration of system execution have been presented in the paper. WebIntegrated has good potential in enhancing and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the blended marketing strategy planning process. It can also be used as a smart software tool for training marketing managers and students.

This paper was first published on the International Conference on Computer Science and Service System (CSSS 2012), 2012, Nanjing, China. The citation details: Li, Shuliang & Li, Jim Zheng (2012), "A Web-based hybrid system for blended electronic, mobile and social media marketing planning". In: IEEE Proceedings of the International Conference on Computer Science and Service System (CSSS 2012). IEEE, pp. 3549-3552. ISBN 9781467307192.

To make progress on this project, further work is being undertaken to test and evaluate the overall value and impact of the WebIntegrated system with company directors and managers. The WebIntegrated system will also be extended to include more marketing strategy models and domain knowledge.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The WebIntegrated system was created and developed by Jim Zheng Li and Dr Shuliang Li in the summer of 2011. They therefore own the copyright of this software product.

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