

Opportunities and Challenges of Adopting E-commerce in Algerian Small and Medium Enterprises for Export Orientation

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Abstract:

The current research paper aims to explore the requirements for Algerian SMEs to adopt electronic commerce as an effective tool to access the international market mainly with regard to Algeria's efforts to diversify its exports and reduce its dependence on crude oil for its foreign trade. To this end we employed a descriptive analytical approach and data related to the study from different references and sources the study concluded that electronic commerce was an opportunity for Algerian SMEs to move towards export and to enter the international market at the lowest cost. This requires keeping pace with the requirements of the transition to electronic commerce in terms of technological, regulatory, and environmental readiness. E-marketing strategies provided by global platforms and electronic media, however, face many challenges, mainly those related to electronic payment gates, logistics, and recovery policy, as well as cybersecurity problems.

Keywords: E-commerce, Small and medium enterprises, Information and Communication Technology, Export.

JEL Classification: P45, F14.

1. Introduction:

Algerian SMEs want to enter the world of exports and access international markets, but they encounter fierce competition imposed by many foreign enterprises, especially multinational corporations.

The development of ICT has removed geographical barriers between States and increased the interconnectedness of international markets ", which has led most of the world's institutions to turn to electronic commerce as a gateway to promoting their products and enhancing their position in markets, EC represents an opportunity for Algerian SMEs to adopt them to upgrade their exports EC allows enterprises to sell their products and services in international markets without the need for a genuine presence in these markets, It also enables it to target millions of consumers around the world at the lowest cost, imagining the scale of opportunities in a location such as "AMAZON" AMAZON which owns 400 million active consumers daily or sites such as ALIBABA, ETSY or SHOPIFY, which enables any economic institution to open an online store through them at low costs. EC enables such enterprises to market their products and services electronically in any market they wish to target, only requiring them to own a well-designed website and promote it via search engines. "SEM" or even via social media or through electronic advertising services such as GOOGLE ADWORD.

Based on the above, the following problems can be raised:

-What are the opportunities and challenges for Algerian SMEs to adopt E-commerce for export Orientation?

To answer this problem, we ask the following sub-questions:

- What are the stages and procedures for Algerian SMEs to adopt e-commerce?
- How are the products of Algerian SMEs promoted through electronic commerce to access international markets?
- What challenges do SMEs face in applying EC to upgrade their exports?

We formulate the following hypotheses to answer these sub-questions:

- Algerian SMEs seek to adopt electronic commerce through their inclination to move towards electronic transactions and to adopt a rational strategy based on technological, regulatory, and environmental readiness to export their products and services in international markets;

- Global and regional EC platforms provide SMEs with opportunities to identify and market their products at a low cost;

- Algeria's SMEs face many challenges of export when using electronic commerce, the most important of which is the weak electronic structure and the lack of harmonization of laws.

In a bid to answer the main question and sub-questions and test the validity of hypotheses, the study addressed the following points: the readiness of technological, regulatory, and environmental factors, the stages of transition from traditional to online

business activity, the promotion of the enterprise's online business activity, and the challenges facing SME in establishing its digital business.

2. Readiness of technological, regulatory and environmental factors (TRE FACTORS)

"Louis Tornatzky" and "Mitchell Fleischer" were the first to address the problem of adopting new technology in an enterprise by identifying the factors affecting the decision to adopt technology within an enterprise, namely, the following three factors: technological, regulatory, and environmental¹.

2.1 Technological factors:

The level of current technology and techniques used, as well as the extent to which modern technology and techniques are used and adopted, as well as the assessment of the level of technological readiness from the technological infrastructure used to the skills required for the adoption and control of this technology, as well as the level of complexity and ease of use².

2.2 Organizational factors:

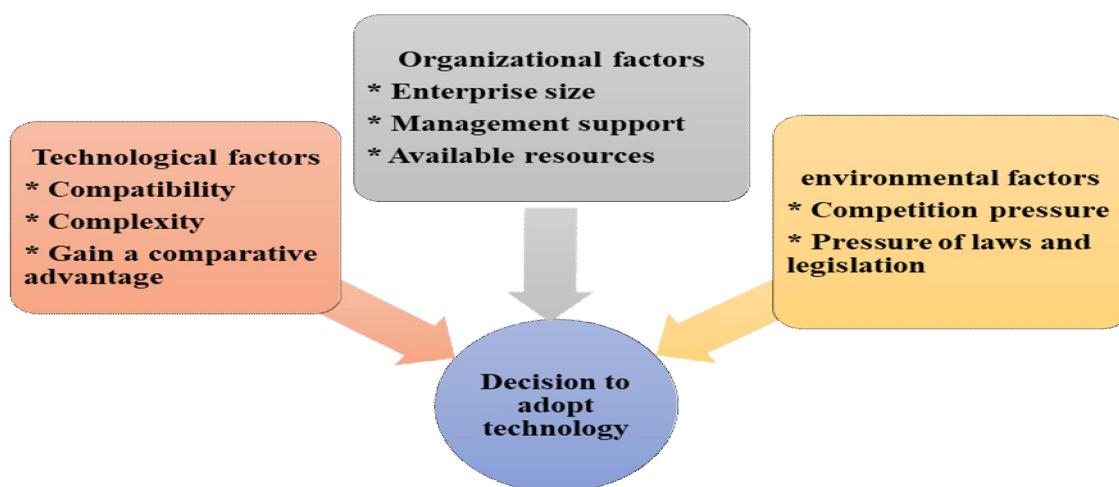
The amount of resources available to the enterprise and its organizational characteristics, the size of the company, the complexity of the management structure, and other factors affecting the organizational aspect of the enterprise³.

2.3 Environmental factors:

the enterprise's external surroundings and external factors affecting it, for example, the structure and size of the industry, the severity of competition, the enterprise's ability to access resources, and its compatibility with government laws and legislation⁴.

The following figure shows the basic factors for adopting technology in an organization according to Tornatzky and Fleischer:

Fig.1. Technological, regulatory, and environmental factors for adopting technology in the enterprise.



Source: Louis.G.Tornatzky, Mitchell Fleischer, **The Processes Of Technological Innovation**, Lecington Books, D.C.Heath and Company/Lexington, Massachusetts, Toronto, 1990, p40.

the adoption of electronic commerce in Algerian SMEs requires a range of technological factors. In other words, an enterprise must be technologically compatible with the application of the concept of EC and its possession of the necessary technological

infrastructure in addition to knowing the complexity of dealing in electronic commerce and the extent to which the enterprise possesses the necessary competencies capable of controlling electronic commerce technology, In addition, the institution should not neglect the value of the comparative advantage gained in case of electronic commerce to take advantage of its advantages, especially in penetrating the international market to upgrade its exports.

As for regulatory factors, the decision to adopt EC in an enterprise must be made based on the size of the enterprise - human and material capital - and the extent to which management supports the decision to adopt it within the institution, taking into account the availability of the necessary resources to carry out this process.

The environmental factor is the last factor to rely on for the decision to adopt EC in the Algerian SME. by knowing the compatibility with laws and legislation, on the one hand, and the latter's support for the enterprise if it enters the field of electronic commerce on the other hand in addition to competition pressure which is considered an influential factor in the event that the enterprise adopts EC techniques.

3. Transition phases from traditional to online business

The transition process of SME business from traditional business operation to online business seems challenging and complex at first glance. However, the development of an appropriate and well-executed plan along with a full commitment and willingness of decision makers within a corporation to allocate the time and resources needed to invest in this process leads to a smooth and effective transition towards online business and thus enterprises will reap the desired benefits from this transition, such as increasing access to the largest number of markets and customers and maximizing the enterprise's income.

The phases of SME's transition from traditional business to online business are as follows:

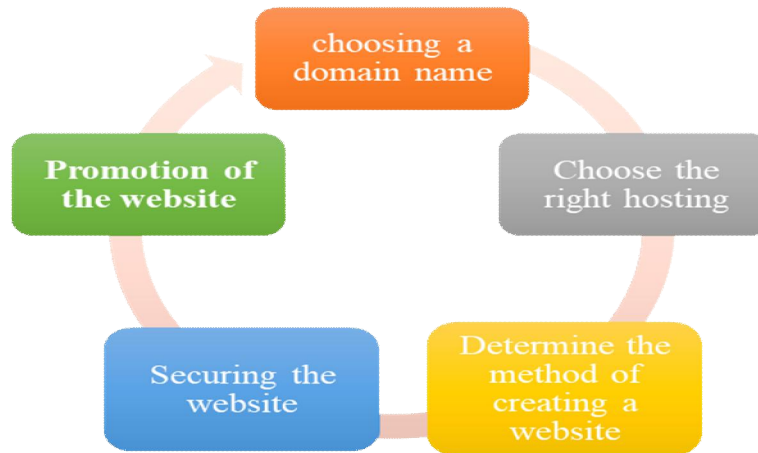
3.1 Creating a website:

Enterprise managers believe that the best way to reach the largest number of customers is through traditional marketing channels which is wrong, in the digital age organization must prepare itself for customers to look for it and its products rather than for them, Imagine how many opportunities SME can get in a digital world with 4.33 billion users consuming six and a half hours a day browsing nearly 1.7 billion websites ⁵.

SME does not need major efforts or financial resources to create its website, as this service is provided by many specialized offices and sites, compared to the broad prospects that will open to the enterprise and its sales, by reaching new customers and increasing the visibility of the services and products of the enterprise provided ⁶.

The process of establishing a website is in the following key stages:

Fig.2. Basic stages of the process of creating a website.



Source: Prepared by the researcher

3.1.1 Domain Name Selection:

This is the first step to creating the Foundation's website. It serves as the enterprise address in the Internet world for customers, so the organization works to promote its name by improving its products and services. The domain name is better to be the same as the business name, preferably the enterprise chooses the most famous domain extension globally (.com) Especially if it aspires to promote its products and services in international markets, if it only seeks to be active locally it is better to choose a country domain name(.dz) ⁷.

Enterprises can buy the domain name through several companies that provide this service globally such as "domain", "Godady," Hostinger ", etc., or locally such as "Dzsecurity ", or Algiers Telecommunications, and even the Algerian Chamber of Commerce and Industry that offers the domain extension (.dz) free of charge to Algerian enterprises and companies.

3.1.2 Choosing the right hosting:

the right hosting is the appropriate place on the Internet where the organization will save its files and all its data, and when studying hosting offers, companies should focus on the two most important variables: The storage space that must be sufficient for the organization, the bandwidth or what is known as "Bandwidth" which represents the amount of data that the server will bear and the larger the quantity the faster the site browses and the speed of loading files from it is good, and the enterprise will avoid stopping the site when visitors pressure it⁸.

In the case of hosting, it is always preferable to deal with Algerian companies that provide these services. because their servers are located inside Algerian territory, on the one hand, and to maintain the confidentiality of data and protect it from hacks and external institutions on the other hand.

3.1.3 How to create a website:

An enterprise can create its website in different ways. This may depend on offices specializing in site programming or can rely on website creation platforms. In general, creating a website can be done in two basic ways:

- **Using website creation platforms:** these platforms can easily create the website even if the person is not familiar with the basics and techniques of programming. One of the

most important features of these platforms is that they provide site control services through the control panel, the possibility of changing the templates and the format of the site, adding and editing pages, and managing the users of the site with ease. "WordPress" which is the most popular platform, as well as other platforms such as "Weebly", "Webstars" and "Squarespace" are paid platforms, and there are some free platforms to create a website such as "Launchrock"⁹.

- **Creating the website from scratch:** What distinguishes the process of creating the website from scratch is the possibility of customizing the site to suit the direction of the enterprise and the wishes of its managers, If platforms impose certain designs and templates, the process of creating the site from scratch allows greater freedom to do so, In general, the establishment of an enterprise's website from scratch can depend on offices and website developers specializing in it or on developers active in self-employment platforms. "Freelancer", or by hiring specialists in the development of enterprise-level websites.

3.1.4 Securing the website:

Securing the website is a very important process in order to protect the site and the data of the organization and users from various security threats. There are many criteria by which the website can be secured:

- Obtaining an SSL certificate for the site is known as a secure socket layer protocol, as obtaining this certificate contributes to the process of encrypting data between both the user and the server and cannot be exposed to it. The sites holding this certificate can be identified by noting that they start with an extension "HTTPS" and browsers such as "CHROME" warn the user that the site does not have this certification in addition to securing the site through it helps to improve the ranking of the site in search engines¹⁰.
- Purchase security plugins, especially if the site is designed by specialized platforms. The enterprise's website can also be secured using a Firewall, through backup of data provided by hosting companies, or even through the use of information security experts¹¹.

3.1.5 Website Promotion:

The last stage in the website creation process, and there are many ways in which the website can be promoted both through the search engine optimization process "SEO" or through social media marketing and also through content marketing, not to mention using paid advertising platforms such as "Google Adword", "Facebook ads" and other paid advertising platforms.

3.2 Setting up an e-store

Creating an e-store is one of the most important decisions an economic enterprise can make in order to access the external market and export its products In particular, the cost of setting up an e-store is relatively low compared to traditional stores, The essence of the difference between the online store and the website is that the latter is regarded as the Foundation's media site whilst the online store can shop, buy products and settle through electronic payment gates and even distribute the product to the customer and after-sales service¹².

An online store can be developed from scratch by activating the online payment service for products on-site and including how to distribute and deliver the product and making regulations and laws for after-sales services. However, this step is considered costly for SMEs, especially if they have weak financial resources. Hence, the orientation of e-store platforms is the most practical solution compared to the establishment of an e-store from scratch for the following reasons:

- ✓ Provides an easy-to-use interface in order to create and modify the store as desired, easy setup and maintenance;
- ✓ Low cost compared to the establishment of an electronic store from scratch;
- ✓ Provide many "Plugins" additions such as security additions to secure the store or add ads to the store.

The next table shows the best platforms that provide e-store construction services:

Table (1): Best international and Arab platforms to create an online store.

| Global Platforms | an overview about Global Platforms | Arabic Platforms | an overview about Arabic Platforms |
|------------------|--|------------------|--|
| . Shopify | Considered one of the most popular and easy-to-use platforms, it offers many distinctive templates and additions as well as technical support. | Expand Cart | The oldest Arab platform, and it is the perfect choice for many online sellers |
| WooCommerce | A well-known platform affiliated with “Wordpress” that allows you to create an online store as desired. | Matajer | An Arab-Saudi platform that allows the establishment of an electronic store from any Arab country. |
| . Magneto | From the open source platforms that offer this service. | Welt | A modern Egyptian platform currently considered one of the best platforms to create an online store |
| BigCommerce | Platforms that offer many distinctive options, templates and additions. | Salla | An Emirati platform to create e-stores owned by basket the holding company. |
| OpenCart | Open source and low cost platform for setting up an online store. | Zid | A Saudi platform for the establishment of electronic stores was established in 2017 include more than 4,000 e-stores |

Source: Prepared by the researcher.

3.3 Subscribe to global EC platforms

this option represents an innovative solution for SMEs, especially those who want to open up to the global market. Imagine millions of potential visitors who can view your products daily with the opportunity to convert these visitors to customers, not to mention the possibility of distributing the enterprise's products through these platforms. The benefits of subscribing to EC platforms for SMEs include:¹³

- Shortening time: the presence of these platforms reduces time to the establishment of an electronic store from scratch because there is no clear vision for the enterprise in this area;

- Wider Customer Access: Research that enables EC platforms to reach as many customers as locally or internationally;
- Cost savings: compared to traditional trade, the cost of advertising, marketing, and even employees can be saved by subscribing to EC platforms;
- Facilitation of the management process: these platforms provide easy-to-use and sophisticated tools to track enterprise sales and inventory management as well as customer data analysis processes;
- Increasing the enterprise's competitiveness: by reducing the cost of entry into global markets and thereby granting the enterprise a competitive advantage;
- Speed of interaction: by facilitating and accelerating transactions between the seller and the buyer;
- adapting to technology: these platforms help adapt to modern technological developments and benefit from them in business development processes.

For example, Amazon offers many solutions to organizations by hosting millions of e-stores that offer millions of products to billions of users. One of the solutions that Amazon offers to organizations is the following:

- **Amazon AWS Web Services:** This service gives enterprises access to cloud computing at very affordable prices, this service aims to help SMEs and entrepreneurs improve their sales on the platform by providing a range of software and tools that care about analysis, storage, and productivity¹⁴ ;
- **Amazon FBA Service:** Fulfillment by Amazon means a service provided by Amazon that allows sellers to send and store their products at the company's warehouse level, and when selling the product to the customer via the Amazon platform the latter carries out the process of packaging and shipping the product directly to the customer and even after-sales service¹⁵ .

The following table shows EC platforms that Algeria's SMEs can benefit from:

Table (2): EC platforms that can benefit from their services in Algeria.

| platform | an overview about Platform |
|-------------------------------|--|
| AMAZON | Through its global selling program Amazon Global Selling, Algerian SMEs that want to expand globally can sell and export their products to several countries around the world. |
| ALIBABA and ALI EXPRESS | The platform is one of the most important EC sites between companies in the world. Registration as a source in the platform is sufficient by filling in enterprise data, data and details of products that the enterprise wants to sell through. If the enterprise wants to target consumers directly, it is enough to subscribe to the Aliexpress platform. |
| E-BAY | Through its E-bay business program, the platform allows enterprises to subscribe to this service and list the desired product to sell, and through the platform can market and sell products worldwide. |
| SHOPIFY | One of the most popular online platforms offering many solutions to SMEs such as setting up an e-store, adding products to be sold |

| | |
|------|---|
| | and making them marketable all over the world, as well as providing many diverse services such as connecting with customers, publishing advertisements and marketing offers, and also providing many e-payment solutions. |
| ETSY | If the organization's products are handicrafts or artistic products, Etsy is considered the appropriate platform for selling these products and exporting them to various parts of the world. |

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the platform's websites.

4. Promoting the organization's commercial activity via the Internet

The business activity is promoted online through various e-marketing processes. Therefore, the enterprise must perform a sound planning process for its advertising campaigns online. Targeting the right and appropriate audience leads to more visits to the enterprise's website or e-store. More visits mean that more sales can be obtained and thus more profits and growth can be achieved for the enterprise.

4.1 Search Engine Marketing:

relying on paid advertising services offered by search engines such as Google Adword, allows "SEM" to increase the chances of an enterprise website or e-store appearing in search results by formulating an appropriate marketing strategy that relies on the most searched words from consumers around the world and contributing to their orientation to the enterprise's website or store, increasing what is known as "Traffic" in the Internet world may transform any visitor to the site or store into a potential customer, and the enterprise can also benefit from the search engine optimization service "SEO" is a free service that contributes to improving the ranking of the appearance of an enterprise's website or online store in search results¹⁶.

In the current digital age, having an enterprise website is imperative, and what is important for organizations is how to increase "traffic" and attract visits to the enterprise's website, hence turning these visits into potential clients of the organization¹⁷, The search engine marketing process is controlled by only certain companies. According to statistics website Statista, Google controls 85% of the search engine advertising market. The remaining share of the market is shared by Bing, Yahoo, Baidu, and Yandex¹⁸.

4.2 Social Media Marketing SMM :

It consists of making content and posting it on social media in order to achieve the organization's marketing objectives social media marketing offers SMEs the opportunity to reach over 4.80 billion users worldwide and promote their brand or product through these platforms. This enhances the possibility of increasing their sales, and also through social media, can increase the number of visits to the enterprise's website or e-store and increase confidence in the enterprise's products "Social proof" and contributing to the dissemination of its brand "Branding" as well as increasing communication between the organization and its customers¹⁹.

The following table represents the number of users of the world's most important social media sites in 2023:

Table (3): Number of users of the most important social media sites.

| Platform name | Number of users (million) |
|---------------|---------------------------|
| FACEBOOK | 2 936 |
| YOUTUBE | 2 527 |
| WHATSAPP | 2 000 |
| INSTAGRAM | 2 000 |
| WECHAT | 1 313 |
| TIKTOK | 1 092 |
| FB MESSENGER | 1 036 |
| SNAPCHAT | 750 |
| TELEGRAM | 700 |
| PINTEREST | 450 |

Source: <https://datareportal.com/social-media-users>, Date of access:14 June 2023.

4.3 Email Marketing:

Considered among the most effective and efficient marketing strategies EM is a tool that enables an enterprise to send hundreds, thousands, or even millions of promotional messages that can contain news, offers to sell or others in minutes, this can raise sales and increase potential buyers of enterprise products and even the possibility of sending ad hoc promotional messages to certain customers rather than sending promotions to the mailing list as a whole²⁰.

The organization can build its mailing list by using the services of competent companies to provide email services such as Google, Yahoo, Outlook, Icloud Mail, and MailChimp.

4.4 Paid Advertising Marketing:

In the world of digital marketing, what is known as "PPC" or pay by click, the latter is the most popular method favored by many enterprises, especially small and medium enterprises, due to its effectiveness even if the budget used in marketing is small, and paid advertising marketing helps bring more visits and thus increase sales opportunities, It also helps to promote the organization's brand and contribute to obtaining the data of various target customers. An excellent feature of paid advertising marketing is the great ability to measure the results of the advertising campaign, thereby measuring and knowing the achievement of the advertising campaign's objectives²¹.

There are many paid advertising marketing platforms through which the organization can create targeted advertising campaigns, the most important of which are "Google Ads", "Facebook Ads", "Twitter Ads" and both "Linkedin Ads" and "Youtube Ads".

4.5 Content Marketing:

This method is one of the most powerful marketing methods an organization can take in promoting its products and brand. Content marketing focuses on disseminating useful content online that is related to the nature of the enterprise's activity to attract more targeted customers. The types of content are blogging, publishing short texts, useful articles, photos, infographics, or even visual content such as videos²².

4.6 Influencer Marketing "Content Makers":

It is a modern marketing method that emerged as a result of the emergence of what are known as influencers "Influencer" in the digital world, is the use of influencers and celebrity content makers to promote the products of the organization in order to achieve its marketing objectives. The influencer marketing method focuses on the content maker's review of the product offered by the organization through the social platform through which it is active, or by opening a fund for the enterprise product in a video via a platform "YouTube", for example, or even filming a video of how a particular product is used or illustrating the benefits of using it, or by advertising enterprise products through publications by the content maker itself ²³.

4.7 Inclusion the business activity into Internet guides:

by creating an online commercial file containing all the enterprise's data and a list of products This process is an important step to familiarize the organization and enhance its digital presence, In addition to the possibility of increasing the visibility of the enterprise and its products by potential customers not to mention that the inclusion of the business activity in the Internet directory increases the likelihood that the products offered by the enterprise will appear in the results of everyone looking for products similar to their own and thus the possibility of increasing sales ²⁴.

Many sites allow enterprises to include their business in the Internet indexes, perhaps the most famous of which is "Google My Business", directly linked to the latter's search engine. Some other sites offer this service, such as "Bing Places for Business", which is directly linked to Microsoft's Bing search engine.

5. The challenges that SMEs face in setting up their digital business

Through our review of the steps to move the business activity to the online world, it may seem at first glance that this process is easy, simple, and without any difficulties, but the reality of the situation proves otherwise, as this process faces many difficulties that can torpedo the enterprise's project of commercial presence in the digital world and the penetration of the international market through it, the most important of these difficulties is how to include the best electronic payment gates, especially those accepted by the Algerian Central Bank, as well as transport and logistics problems, as well as "cybersecurity" problems and product recovery policy problems.

5.1 Difficulties in including electronic payment gateway:

The online payment portal is the only link between the bank and the credit card whose data has been entered on the Internet in order to transfer money from the buyer to the seller. The failure of Algerian enterprises to know how to include electronic payment portals on their website or online store is one of the difficulties encountered in establishing their online business.

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Many companies provide services for listing electronic payment gateways by making it possible to include the application programming interface (API) for the electronic payment process on the organization's website or online store. Perhaps the most famous of these companies is Paypal, through which the Bank of Algeria allows sending and receiving money and transferring money. It is automated through "Paypal", so for Algeria to enter the world of electronic commerce, it is enough to add "Paypal E-payment API" in its online store. Many other international companies provide this service, such as "Worldpay" and "Stripe". "Opayo", "Tap" and others.

There is also currently a leading Arab platform in this field that offers the best e-payment and EC services to SMEs. The platform is a "billing" platform in Qatar. It offers its payment and EC solutions to more than 72 thousand enterprises in 27 countries. It also supports many international currencies and shares several e-payment portals such as "Paypal", "Stripe", "Tap" and others²⁵.

5.2 Cyber Security Problems:

Cyber Security problems that SMEs can face include the disruption of their website or e-store, the hacking of it, and the acquisition of customer data, especially their financial data, which can result in loss of customer confidence in the enterprise, Data hackers use advanced techniques and tactics to steal the data and information of both the enterprise and customers. Therefore, the organization's role here is not only to protect its data. and, more importantly, how to protect customer data in order to preserve an enterprise's reputation and business, There are several actions to be taken by the enterprise to protect its electronic trading data, including:²⁶

- Use of "HTTPS" secure communication protocol and SSL certification to encrypt data transmitted via the network and protect it from penetration;
- Updating and securing the various software used by the organization in its website or e-store, securing databases from unauthorized access and using encryption techniques;
- Conduct some security tests to identify and address potential security gaps prior to pirates' use.

5.3 Logistics difficulties:

At the beginning of their online activity, SMEs may face difficulties in delivering products to their international customers. These difficulties are shipping transportation, and warehousing services. The lack of expertise of SMEs in logistics may expose them to problems in delivering their products to their customers in a timely manner, which may affect their online transactions and lose confidence in the enterprise.

There are many solutions that a small and medium-sized enterprise can try to overcome logistical problems, including contracting with a shipping company responsible for shipping and transportation services. When resorting to this solution, it is preferable to pay attention to the availability of the company with which it was contracted with an order tracking system via the "GPS" feature. The best solution for logistics remains for the organization to resort to what is known as "Third Party Logistics (3PL)," which are companies responsible for storing, packaging, shipping, and transporting the organization's

products instead. Thus, the organization achieves many goals, such as reducing expenses and avoiding unexpected events in delivery and delivery on time, in addition to Meeting customers' desires and achieving their satisfaction. Many companies provide these services, perhaps the most famous of which are “UPS,” “DHL,” and “FEDEX.” And others²⁷ .

The experience and service of product delivery to the customer is one of the most important services in the EC chain. 87% of customers confirm that the delivery and shipping experience is the most important decision affecting the continuation of their subsequent dealings with the e-store²⁸ .

5.4 Recovery policy difficulties:

One of the problems that SMEs face when moving their business to the Internet world is the difficulties of the return or even replacement policy, sometimes customer may change his or her opinion on the products she has previously acquired and wish to return them and even replace them in case of non-use or even utilization of the product, Therefore, an organization that wishes to gain and retain customers' trust must establish a clear policy for this process in its website and online store. In order to establish a clear retrieval policy for the customer, an enterprise must focus on the following points²⁹ :

- ✓ Writing retrieval policy clauses in several languages;
- ✓ Establish clearly defined conditions for recovery items such as replacement and recovery on specific days or in case the commodity is not in conformity with the specifications of the customer's online access, and list even non-refundable products;
- ✓ Establish clearly defined clauses regarding the way and duration of the return of funds to the customer how to recharge the product and whether it is the responsibility of the enterprise or the customer.

Establishing a clear retrieval and replacement policy for items and features is one of the most important elements the customer seeks before making any online purchase decision as well as helping the enterprise to gain customer confidence retain loyalty and raise the likelihood of future buybacks, Statistics indicate that about 73% of customers consider that the convenient return and replacement policy and experience greatly helps in future site or e-store buybacks³⁰ .

6. Conclusion:

EC represents an unparalleled opportunity for Algerian SMEs to delve into exports with least cost. Everyone connected to the Internet is considered to be a potential customer in the world of electronic business, Therefore, these enterprises must compete in this market as an opportunity to sell and promote their products in the international market. the size of the EC market in the world is close to \$9 trillion according to statistics for the year 2023.

In order to enter the world of e-commerce, SMEs must first ensure their readiness technologically, organizationally and environmentally, as well as endeavor to transfer their traditional business activities to the world of the Internet and promote them through websites, e-stores and even EC platforms, which will lead to raise export potential without the need for substantial financial resources.

However, despite the simplicity of entering the world of electronic commerce, the challenges that Algerian SMEs can face varies, such as the difficulty of including international electronic payment gates, protecting data, cybersecurity problems. Other

challenges are related to products supply, logistics, recovery policy and after-sales services. If SMEs manage to overcome these difficulties, they will be able to export easily through electronic commerce.

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