

Text messaging to Whatsapp—early adopters and inertia

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Text messaging remains an important means of electronic communication for many people requiring only the simplest connection to the cell phone network. Nevertheless, other more sophisticated tools such as Whatsapp are increasingly prevalent given their multimedia capabilities and the near ubiquity of smartphones and almost universal wireless broadband connectivity in major towns and cities and beyond. Julian Bühler and Markus Bick Chair of Business Information Systems at the ESCP Europe Business School Berlin, Germany, ask what influences how quickly such technologies are adopted in different parts of the world and how the novel displaces the old.

Writing in the International Journal of Mobile Communications, the team has looked at the use of text messaging and Whatsapp and how these have a cultural impact on mobile commerce in two countries: the United Kingdom and Russia. Fundamentally, the team found, the expectations of users in the UK are higher than those in Russia when interacting with mobile commerce sites. This is particularly true of user expectations for hedonic services. It seems, however, that social surroundings actually play a minor role in the user decision-making process. UK users are often [early adopters](#) especially in the hedonic sphere seeking out new technology whereas Russian users maintain inertia with the initial services and systems and stay with them in the long term. When Russian users do change they are eager and keen to try out all the new functionality of a service.

The team suggests that their findings have implications for how companies hoping to introduce new technology and services might assess the putative market. They should introduce the [service](#) in the UK first as a testing ground for early adoption and move to the Russian market if

the UK proves enthusiastic.

More information: Julian Bühler et al. From text messages to WhatsApp: cultural effects on m-commerce service adoption in the UK and Russia, *International Journal of Mobile Communications* (2019).
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