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Classification of Electronic Commerce

A common classification of electronic commerce is by the nature of the transaction or the relationship among participants. The following types are commonly distinguished:

Business-to-Business (B2B)

All of the participants in this type of electronic commerce are businesses or other organizations. For example, several of M&S's applications involve B2B with its suppliers. Over 85 percent of e-commerce volume is B2B.

Business-to-Consumer (B2C)

B2C EC includes retail transactions of product or services from businesses to individual shoppers. The typical shopper at Amazon.com is a consumer or customer. This e-commerce type is also called *e-tailing*.

Consumer-to-Business (C2B)

The C2B category includes individuals who use the Internet to sell products or services to organizations, as well as individuals who seek sellers to bid on products or services they need. Priceline.com is a well-known C2B organizer of such transactions.

Consumer-to-Consumer (C2C)

In the C2C category, consumers sell directly to other consumers. Examples include individuals selling residential property, cars, and so on, in classified ads. The advertisement of personal services over the Internet and the selling of knowledge and expertise online are other examples of C2C. In addition, many auction sites such as eBay.com allow individuals to place items up for auction.

E-Learning

In e-learning, training or education is provided online. E-learning is used heavily by organizations for training employees (called *e-training*). It is also practiced at virtual universities.

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