**E-COMMERCE**

E-Commerce, or e-business, is the application of information and communication technologies (ICT) in support of all the activities of business. Commerce constitutes the exchange of products and services between businesses, groups and individuals and can be seen as one of the essential activities of any business.

**EXAMPLES OF SERVICES**

* E-Banking
* Auctions
* E-Shopping

**E-Shopping**

This is where one is able to purchase any good online. A larger variety of goods is likely to be found online rather than the stores themselves. An example of how the procedure takes place, a customer searches for a desired transactional website e.g. [www.kotec.com](http://www.kotec.com) , searches for intended good to be purchased and the good is therefore moved into a virtual shopping cart. Once the customer is done with choosing the items the website will redirect you to the check-out point where you are required to put in your credit card details, after ordering you are required to put in your credit card details, after the ordering of an item, your good will be delivered to you within a certain number of days or weeks according to your location.

**Advantages**

This service is available 24/7, allowing the customer to access the website at any time. It is also very easy to use and is straight forward. It also saves a lot of time rather than going to the store physically.

**Disadvantages**

The only major drawback from shopping online is that the item can be counterfeit and the item may be not what you expected. Another issue facing online shopping is the security and confidentiality of the credentials given e.g. credit card details.

**Auctions**

Auctions are basically when items are put out in the market and people who are interested in them are able to bid for them from a starting price and the highest bidder wins the item. Back in the day auctions were never found online, but now people are able to conduct the auctions online, and software for frequent auctioneers. One very common website is [www.ebay.com](http://www.ebay.com). Anyone is able to put their item online and the auction can begin.

It is very easy to use, you can search for the category that you are interested in and from there you will be able to find the item you are looking for.

**E-Banking**

A bank is an institution that manages banking services for profits. People open bank accounts in order to keep their money safe rather than having it at home where it is not safe. Such processes like withdrawal of money and depositing money are carried out in banks now with the introduction of the internet we are able to access our bank accounts online and carry out all the processes apart from obvious processes like cashing in cheques.

When you visit a bank’s website you are presented with space to type in your bank account details, and from there you are able to transfer money from your account to another.

Newer methods of banking have been introduced, for example Equitel, new initiatives that have been introduced in Kenya which enable people to access their Equity Bank accounts through their phone, all you are required to have is a sim card which will be able to conduct your transactions .

**Advantages**

One main advantage is that you can access these services at anytime and anywhere. Another advantage is the increased mobility of the service which would be very convenient for people who operate businesses on the move.

**Disadvantages**

Security is one main problem facing e-banking, this is mainly because people are able to access others’ information and therefore committing online fraud.