Electric commerce (eCommerce) has been respectively accepted as a business practice in the commercial world. Though, most research and news coverage has focused on the practiced usage in large firms. In 1996 the European Regional Development Fund and BT funded the Electric Commerce Innovation Centre, at Cardiff University, to operate a two-year project aimed at researching electronic commerce implementations in small-to-medium sized enterprises. Near the end of 1998 additional funding was received to further the project for two more years.

The first aim of the project was to, undertake the implementation process of widely available electronic commerce solutions, and, secondly, to monitor and research the usage patterns and the effects of these technologies not on the smaller companies independently, but also on their customers, suppliers and collaborators (Davies & Garcia-Sierra 97). The subject of the project was three case studies of electronic trading activities of smaller firms located in South Wales.