## Irish <br> E-Commerce

Report

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2011

Information on results from the first annual 2011 Irish ECommerce Survey. Discusses e-commerce, social media, and marketing spend data from Financial Year 2010 as it pertains to Irish businesses with a company e-commerce website.

Results and
Analysis of the Irish E-Commerce Survey

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## Executive Summary

## Project Overview

The 2011 Irish E-Commerce Survey was undertaken by StudioForty9 as part of a standalone project to gather current and relevant statistics pertaining to the state of e-commerce in Ireland in the Financial Year of 2010. There is presently a lack of information available on a sector that is becoming increasingly important not only to the Irish market but to the global economy. The survey explored different business outcomes related to operating an e-commerce website, including average conversion rate and basket value. It also delved somewhat into marketing costs and social media usage.

The main goal of the survey was to address the following: (1) As an Irish company considering selling online to the Irish market, what are the opportunities? What are realistic achievement figures? (2) As an established Irish e-commerce merchant, what's the benchmark? How well is the company competing?

## Survey Methodology

Because of the complete lack of existing statistical data pertaining to specific Irish e-commerce statistics, primary research was a necessary means of data collection. With a focus on companies competing in the e-commerce sphere, an online survey created using Qualtrics was chosen as the best means of survey distribution. This low cost option enabled simple and quick creation of the survey and had the ability to reach the largest amount of relevant potential participants. It also allowed for the collection and recording of responses in real time. A database of companies to contact was compiled using Google searches and web directories.

## Results

For companies headquartered in Ireland, 17\% of the 2010 Financial Year total turnover was derived through online sales: average total turnover was €432,085.78 and average turnover through ecommerce sites was $€ 74,445$. 40 .

The average conversion rate input by companies was $\mathbf{3 . 4 7 \%}$ while the one manually calculated by dividing total orders by total website visits (previously entered) was $\mathbf{1 . 9 2 \%}$.

Similarly, the average basket value, calculated by dividing total website turnover by total orders, was also different, albeit reversed, between input values ( $£ 85.78$ ) and calculated values ( $£ \mathbf{1 0 7 . 8 0}$ ).

To further understand companies' perception of e-commerce sales generation, participants were asked to rank 9 different channels. The top two, direct traffic and search engine traffic, were relatively close in ranking, email newsletter followed at a distant third. 64\% of respondents ranked affiliate last.

AMAS recently conducted a survey asking marketers why social media is used. This survey solicited the same information in order to understand if those dealing primarily with e-commerce, in small companies, would feel the same. The ranking followed a similar pattern: building brand awareness (67\%), building relationships (63\%), listening and monitoring (37\%), commenting (30\%), and gathering customer information (17\%).

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## Project Description

As a web design company that specialises in e-commerce development, StudioForty9 frequently encounters clients interested in statistics related to the Irish online market. When clients are considering launching an e-commerce website, they want to know what to expect in terms of return on investment. However, currently, numbers relating to an average conversion rate or basket value specific to industries in the Irish market do not exist. This deficiency creates difficulty when companies wish to make forecasts and predictions of future online sales.

The purpose of this project is to help Irish companies involved in the e-commerce sector better benchmark current competitive positions and evaluate future growth opportunities. The end goal is to further the overall knowledge available on an increasingly important national and global industry sector. This data will allow companies to better measure the effectiveness of current e-commerce strategies. As e-commerce success is ever more dependent on integration with social media activity, additional insights on social media usage by Irish companies were also gathered. Lastly, the survey also looked at spending in regards to online and offline marketing for the e-commerce site along with website overhead costs to understand the interaction between marketing expenditures and online turnover.

## Survey Methodology

Because of the complete lack of existing statistical data pertaining to specific Irish e-commerce statistics, primary research was a necessary means of data collection. With a focus on companies competing in the e-commerce sphere, an online survey was chosen as the best means of survey distribution. This low cost option enabled simple and quick creation of the survey and had the ability to reach the largest amount of relevant potential participants. It also allowed for the collection and recording of responses in real time and the ability to export data to Excel for analysis. Qualtrics, a U.S. based company specialising in market research and enterprise feedback management, was used to create and launch the survey.

Using Google searches and web directories, a list of 1,308 companies was assembled. Emails notifying companies of the upcoming survey, along with a follow-up email with a direct link to the survey, were sent to the complete list. Additionally, during the survey development process, a website and Twitter account were created to inform businesses in the Irish e-commerce sphere of different aspects of the upcoming survey and develop interest in participation. Upon the launch of the survey, the direct link was posted on the Irish E-Commerce Survey blog website, LinkedIn group, and Twitter account. The survey was open for three weeks from March 9 - April 1. Over 113 people clicked to begin the survey; however, only 64 companies started the survey by answering the first question. A total of 33 companies provided e-commerce figures, and 29 participants fully completed the survey.

Unfortunately, this small sample size limits the amount of statistical significance that can be placed on the data gained through the survey. Using a sample size calculator, with a $90 \%$ confidence interval allowing for a $10 \%$ margin of error, 68 respondents were needed. To decrease the margin of error to 5\%, the ideal sample size jumps to 268 companies. These numbers were calculated using a population of 21,000 e-commerce companies determined by the following: 153,419 .ie domains registered at the end of $2010,66 \%$ of which were business, of which $21 \%$ had an e-commerce site.

However, despite the small sample, the information gathered is interesting and among the first of its kind in the Irish market. It is the hope that companies will begin to see the importance of operating with this knowledge and take a more active role in future research.

## Research Limitations

While over 1,000 e-commerce companies were contacted through email, this left a large portion of the relevant population who were not reached. Additionally, as the companies were selected from Google searches and web directories, convenience sampling was used. Therefore, the sample was not representative of the Irish e-commerce market as a whole, particularly in terms of company size and industry. Small companies were more likely to respond, and there was not an even distribution of companies across the different industry sectors.

Contact information was at times difficult to locate. For many companies, information about the survey was sent to the general 'info' email address and not directly to the person best suited to address survey questions. Based off of statistics from our email distributor, over half of the emails were never opened, and it is assumed that a great number of them were automatically deleted.

Because this project was being conducted independently by a small company, there was no funding behind the project to develop the necessary amount of interest and authority. Due to the researcher's schedule, there were also time constraints to develop the survey as well as gather and analyse the responses. Lastly, the use of an online survey limits the ability of researchers to monitor participants, address any confusion, and encourage completion of the survey. A large number of responders who clicked to open the survey did not answer any questions or only answered the first few before exiting the survey.

## Results: Individual Questions

Tables and/or graphs will be provided in conjunction with the verbal description of results for most questions. A Micro/Ireland heading represents those companies that have less than 10 employees and are headquartered in Ireland. Ireland refers to all companies headquartered in Ireland - including micro companies. Total includes all the question respondents.

## Company Background

Question 1: In which general industry sector does this company compete?
As the first question of the survey, all participants were asked to specify the industry in which their company competes. There were a total of 64 responses, the maximum amount of responses obtained throughout the survey. The question style was multiple choice with a list of 13 different broad industry categories and the option to input text into the answer selection of 'Other.' Participants could only select a single answer choice. An answer selection to this question was required.

The industry options of 'Entertainment' and 'Financial Services' did not receive any responses. 'Apparel,' with 10 out of the 64 responses ( $15.63 \%$ ), and 'Online Services' with 9 of 64 ( $14.06 \%$ ), were the industry sectors with the most participation. The full breakdown of responses by industry participation can be seen in Figure 1. Text entries in the 'Other' option included: consumer product, sustainable products, and education.

|  | $\mathbf{N}$ | \% |
| :--- | :---: | :---: |
| Apparel | 10 | $15.63 \%$ |
| Charity/Non-Profit | 1 | $1.56 \%$ |
| Electronics | 7 | $10.94 \%$ |
| Food \& Beverage | 6 | $9.38 \%$ |
| Health \& Beauty | 2 | $3.13 \%$ |
| Home \& Garden | 6 | $9.38 \%$ |
| Niche Retail | 7 | $10.94 \%$ |
| Office Supply | 1 | $1.56 \%$ |
| Online Services | 9 | $14.06 \%$ |
| Sports \& Outdoors | 6 | $9.38 \%$ |
| Travel \& Tourism | 2 | $3.13 \%$ |
| Other | 7 | $10.94 \%$ |

Table 1: Industry Participation


Figure 1: Percentage Breakdown by Respondents' Industry Participation

Question 2: What area of specialisation within the previously specified industry sector does this company compete?
Because the industry sectors were categorised so broadly, a follow-up question was asked in order to specify company sub-specialisation areas. Grouped together here, there were actually 13 different questions in the survey design. Depending on which industry sector participants chose in the first question, the next question displayed would pertain to subspecialisation options relevant to that industry. For example, if a respondent chose the 'Travel \& Tourism' answer selection in Question 1, the next question presented the following answer selections: 'Destination,'

| Specialisation Category | N | \% of <br> Responses* | \% of <br> Answers* |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Apparel |  |  |  |
| Women's | 3 | $30.00 \%$ | $25.00 \%$ |
| Shoes | 1 | $10.00 \%$ | $8.33 \%$ |
| Jewellery and Accessories | 2 | $20.00 \%$ | $16.67 \%$ |
| Kid's | 3 | $30.00 \%$ | $25.00 \%$ |
| Men's | 2 | $20.00 \%$ | $16.67 \%$ |
| Other | 1 | $10.00 \%$ | $8.33 \%$ |
| Online Services |  |  |  |
| Software Products / Licenses | 1 | $11.11 \%$ | $10.00 \%$ |
| Internet Service Providers | 2 | $22.22 \%$ | $20.00 \%$ |
| Hosting Services | 3 | $33.33 \%$ | $30.00 \%$ |
| Other | 4 | $44.44 \%$ | $40.00 \%$ |
| * total >100\% because of multiple answers |  |  |  |

Table 2: Specialisation Selections for Apparel and Online Services Industries
'Flights,' 'Hotel,' ‘Trip Planning,' and 'Other.' This was a multiple choice question but allowed respondents to select multiple answer options and enter text into the answer selection of 'Other.' The question was required and received 64 Responses.

While there may have been other answer options for each specialization category, the table only displays those choices which were actually selected by survey participants. For a full list of categories, refer to the full questionnaire in Appendix A. Table 2 displays the percentage of responses and answers for the 'Apparel' and 'Online Services' industries. For a full breakdown of answer selections for industry specializations, see Appendix B.

Question 3: Where is this company headquartered?
Participants were then asked to specify where their company is headquartered. This question was


Figure 2: Respondents' Headquarter Location displayed to all participants and, again, had 64 responses. This was a multiple choice question with the option to select a single answer from the following: 'Ireland,' 'United Kingdom,' 'United States,' or 'Other.' In the case of 'Other,' a text entry option was available. The question was optional for participants.

Seen in Figure 2, 94\% (60 of 64) of respondents were headquartered in Ireland. The remaining 6\% were split between the United Kingdom and the United States.

Question 4: In terms of number of employees, what is the size of this company?
The question was displayed to all participants and referred to how large the responding company was based off the amount of people employed. The question was presented as multiple choice with a single answer option. The answer choices included: 'Micro <10,' 'Small <50,' 'Medium <250,' and 'Large >250.' The question was optional for answer.

As seen in Figure 3, with 64 responses, the vast majority at $81 \%$ (52 of 64) were micro companies with less than 10 employees. An additional $11 \%$ were small companies with


Figure 3: Respondents' Company Size fewer than 50 employees.

Question 5: What was the company's total online and offline turnover in Euro for Financial Year 2010? The last question dealing with company background asked participants for the total business turnover. The question was displayed to all participants and responses were optional. The format was open-ended as the researches wanted to obtain a full range of responses to allow for the most valid average calculation.

|  | Micro/Ireland | Ireland |
| :--- | :---: | :---: |
| Average | $€ 257,705.00$ | $€ 432,085.78$ |
| Minimum | $€ 2,500.00$ | $€ 2,500.00$ |
| Maximum | $€ 3,000,000.00$ | $€ 5,200,000.00$ |
| Respondents | 29 | 32 |

Table 3: Total Company Turnover

There were 34 companies that entered data for total turnover. However, only 32 were used in analysis; 2 responses over $€ 3$ B were considered outliers and were not counted in the results. The remaining data was broken down into Micro/Irish companies with 29 respondents and Irish companies which added 3 company responses. As seen in Table 3, the calculated averages were $€ 257,705.00$ and $€ 432,085.78$ respectively.

## Participant Experience

Question 6: How many years have you worked for this company?
Question 7: How many years experience do you have in the previously specified industry?
To understand participants' level of knowledge as it pertained to a specific company and industry, the following two questions were solicited. Both questions were optional. Displayed to all participants, an open-ended question format was again used to obtain exact averages. As text entries varied between months and years, all responses were converted to years during analysis.

A total of 62 participants responded to Question 6 while 61 responded to Question 7. Seen in Table 4, respondents have worked for an average of just over 5 years for the company in which the survey pertained. Most respondents have been longer in the specific industry with an average of 7.78 years experience.

|  | Company | Industry |
| :--- | :---: | :---: |
| Average | 5.15 | 7.78 |
| Minimum | 0.5 | 1 |
| Maximum | 30 | 30 |
| Responses | 62 | 61 |

Table 4: Participants' Years of Experience

## E-Commerce Website

Question 8: How long has this company operated an e-commerce website?


Figure 4: Time Operating an E-Commerce Website

Displayed to all participants as an openended optional question, the responses were all converted to years during analysis. Shown in Figure 4, when only taking micro (<10 employees) companies based in Ireland into consideration (48 responses), companies have been operating an e-commerce site for an average of $\mathbf{2 . 6 8}$ years. After adding in Irish companies with more than 10 employees and companies headquartered outside of Ireland (60 responses), the average increases to 3.41 years.

Question 9: How many e-commerce websites does this company operate?
Asked in an open-ended format, the question was displayed to all participants as an optional question. Across all 61 respondents, there was an average of 1.79 websites. A majority of companies at $72.58 \%$ (45 of 61) only operate one e-commerce site. Considering only Micro/Irish companies, $74 \%$ ( 34 of 50) operate one e-commerce site. One respondent who operated 50 websites was considered an outlier and not included in analysis.

Question 10: What analytics software does this company use?
Presented to all respondents as an optional multiple choice question with a single answer selection, 62 companies responded to which analytics software the company uses. Answer choices can be found in the legend of Figure 5. In regards to 'Other,' there was the option for a text entry. Considering all responses, $84 \%$ (52 of 62) use Google Analytics. When classified by company size and headquarters, the percentage does not vary greatly. Google Analytics is used significantly more than other analytics software.


Figure 5: E-Commerce Analytics Software Usage

Question 11: Does this company have ecommerce tracking within the analytics package?
All participants were asked to specify whether or not the company tracks e-commerce activity through the previously specified analytics package. Shown as an optional multiple choice question allowing a single answer selection, the choices can be found in Figure 6.


Figure 6: E-Commerce Tracking Usage

With 62 responses, percentages were similar across all sizes of companies as well as headquarter locations. Approximately 57\% of respondents ( 35 out of 62 ) have, and use, some form of e-commerce tracking within the company's analytics software. However, an additional approximate $37 \%$ do not have ecommerce tracking, have it but don't use it, or do not know whether or not the company tracks e-commerce information.

## E-Commerce Statistics

Marking the start of the questions regarding e-commerce site performance, the following three questions were displayed to all participants as open-ended questions to obtain as accurate an average as possible. As the statistics on e-commerce were the incentive behind launching the survey, these three questions required a response from participants. The questions regarding website turnover, visits and orders also allowed for the manual calculation of average conversion rates and basket value.

Question 12: What was the turnover through the website(s) in Financial Year 2010? There were no countries headquartered outside of Ireland that responded to this question. The 33 valid

|  | Micro/Ireland | Ireland |
| :--- | :---: | :---: |
| Average | $€ 74,303.16$ | $€ 74,445.40$ |
| Minimum | $€ 520.00$ | $€ 520.00$ |
| Maximum | $€ 380,000.00$ | $€ 380,000.00$ |
| Respondents | 31 | 33 |

Table 5: E-Commerce Website Turnover responses were broken down by Micro/Ireland, making up 94\% (31 of 33) of the participants, and Ireland. Because of the minimal difference in number of responses between the two groups, the averages calculated were similar. Micro/Irish companies had an average e-commerce website turnover in Financial Year 2010 of $€ 74,303.16$. As seen in Table 5 , this average increased slightly to $€ 74,445.40$ after adding the 2 larger companies. These averages equate to a turnover of approximately $€ 204 /$ day for both groups. The maximum website turnover among all respondents was $€ 380,000$ from a Micro/Irish company operating an e-commerce site for the past 4 years.

Question 13: What was the traffic in terms of total visits in Financial Year 2010 to the company's website(s)?
Following a breakdown similar to the previous question, there were 32 responses, $94 \%$ ( 30 of 32 ) were Micro/Irish businesses. In Financial Year 2010, these companies had an average of 128,706 total visits to the e-commerce site. This means that, on average, there were 353 visits per day to e-commerce websites owned by Irish companies

|  | Micro/Ireland | Ireland |
| :--- | :---: | :---: |
| Average | 128,706 | 122,543 |
| Minimum | 646 | 646 |
| Maximum | 900,000 | 900,000 |
| Respondents | 30 | 32 |

Table 6: Total Website Traffic with less than 10 employees. Referring to Table 6, adding in the larger companies actually drops the average to 122,543 total visits or approximately 336 visits per day.

Question 14: How many total orders were transacted through the website(s) in Financial Year 2010? The last question requiring a response asked companies for the total orders transacted through the company e-commerce site. For Micro/Irish companies ( 30 of 32 ), there was an average of 936 orders

|  | Micro/Ireland | Ireland |
| :--- | :---: | :---: |
| Average | 968 | 914 |
| Minimum | 0 | 0 |
| Maximum | 7,500 | 7,500 |
| Respondents | 30 | 32 | transacted through e-commerce websites in Financial Year 2010. On a daily basis, this would mean 2-3 orders transacted. Again, seen in Table 7, when including the 2 larger companies, the average decreases slightly to 914 orders transacted through the company website.

Table 7: Total Orders Transacted

There was one company who has operated an e-commerce site over a year and specified that no orders had been transacted through the site. Upon eliminating that survey response, the average number of annual orders for Micro/Irish and Ireland companies increase to 1,002 and 945 respectively.

Question 15: What was the average conversion rate for this company's website(s) in Financial Year 2010?

Because of the large range of potential responses, and the fact that each percentage point can represent a substantial revenue difference, this question was also displayed as open-ended; however, a response was not required by survey participants. There were 22 companies who input an average conversion rate for Financial Year 2010. From

|  | CR | Calculated CR |
| :--- | :---: | :---: |
| Average | $3.47 \%$ | $1.92 \%$ |
| Minimum | $0.03 \%$ | $0.03 \%$ |
| Maximum | $15.00 \%$ | $4.52 \%$ |
| Responses | 22 | 30 |

Table 8: Input \& Calculated Conversion Rates these responses, an average conversion rate of $3.47 \%$ was calculated.

From the previous questions on website visits and orders, conversion rates were able to be manually calculated based off of those 32 entered responses. Table 8 displays the difference between the conversion rates entered by the company and those determined by information from prior questions. After calculating the rate by dividing the total orders by total website visits, an average conversion rate of $1.92 \%$ was established. Thus, companies are converting website visits into actual orders an average of $1.92 \%$ of the time. The high end of the range also changed substantially. The calculated minimum conversion rate was still $.03 \%$, a company in the online services industry. However, the maximum decreased by over $10 \%$ to $4.52 \%$, a company participating in the home \& garden industry. Therefore, from this information, it seems companies overestimate the actual conversion rate percentage.

Question 16: What was the average basket value for this company's website(s) in Financial Year 2010? This question also did not require a response, as the information could be calculated from previously entered information pertaining to total website turnover and orders. It was, however, displayed to all participants as an open-ended question. With 31 responses input by companies, the average was $€ 85.78$, meaning that per website transaction, customers were spending an average of $€ 85.78$, across all industries. The input values ranged from €10.68 to €360.00.

|  | BV | Calculated BV |
| :--- | :---: | :---: |
| Average | $€ 85.78$ | $€ 107.80$ |
| Minimum | $€ 10.68$ | $€ 20.00$ |
| Maximum | $€ 360.00$ | $€ 533.33$ |
| Responses | 31 | 29 |

Table 9: Input \& Calculated Basket Values

The researcher was able to manually calculate 29 participants' basket values based off of previously entered information. Table 9 displays the difference between the two basket value quantities. After calculating by dividing total website turnover by total orders, the average basket value actually increased to $€ 107.80$. Thus, for every order transacted through the website, customers spend on average over $€ 100$. When calculated, the range also changed from $€ 20.00$ for a company competing in the niche retail industry to $€ 533.33$ for a food \& beverage business.

Question 17: What was the total bounce rate for this company's website(s) in Financial Year 2010? Question 18: What was the average number of pages viewed per visit on the company's website(s)? Question 19: What was the average time spent on the company's website(s) per visit? These three questions relate to other e-commerce website statistics pertaining to how much time people spend on the website and how many pages are viewed each visit. The questions were displayed to all participants as open-ended with an optional response. Table 10 exhibits the results.

With 25 responses, the average bounce rate, or percentage of visitors to the e-commerce site who are only viewing one webpage before exiting the site, was determined to be 40.13\%. Again,

|  | Bounce Rate | \# Pages Viewed | Average Time |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Average | $40.13 \%$ | 5.69 | $0: 04: 25$ |
| Minimum | $14.16 \%$ | 3.00 | $0: 01: 50$ |
| Maximum | $66.70 \%$ | 12.92 | $0: 20: 00$ |
| Responses | 25 | 25 | 26 |

Table 10: Web Page Interaction Data based off of 25 responses, customers are viewing an average of 5.69 web pages every time they visit the company e-commerce site. Lastly, with 26 survey participants responding, an average time spent on the website was calculated. It seems that per visit, users are spending an average of 4 minutes and 25 seconds on an Irish e-commerce website.

Question 20: What conversions do the website(s) track?
As there are different conversion options - convincing people to purchase, register or subscribe - the survey aimed to see which types e-commerce companies were tracking through the websites. The question was optional and displayed to all participants as a multiple choice question allowing for the selection of multiple answers. The answer choices included the following: 'Sales,' 'Subscriptions,' 'Donations,' 'Registrations,' 'Reservations,' 'Ticket Sales,' 'Voucher Sales,' and 'Other' which permitted a text entry.

There were 32 responses determining that the majority at $93.74 \%$ ( 30 of 32 ) of Irish ecommerce websites track ‘Sales.' Seen in Figure 7, this option was followed distantly by 'Registrations' with $21.88 \%$ (7 of 32) of


Figure 7: Respondent Selection of Type of Conversion Tracked respondents. Of the 32 , there were 8 respondents ( $25 \%$ ) who track more than one type of conversion. There were also 2 businesses who responded that the company does not track conversions of any sort. Table 11, below, shows the percentage of respondents who chose each answer option as well as the percentage of how often each answer choice was selected.

|  | $\mathbf{N}$ | \% of Respondents * | \% of Answers* |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Sales | 30 | $93.75 \%$ | $63.83 \%$ |
| Subscriptions | 3 | $9.38 \%$ | $6.38 \%$ |
| Donations | 1 | $3.13 \%$ | $2.13 \%$ |
| Registrations | 7 | $21.88 \%$ | $14.89 \%$ |
| Reservations | 1 | $3.13 \%$ | $2.13 \%$ |
| Ticket Sales | 1 | $3.13 \%$ | $2.13 \%$ |
| Voucher Sales | 2 | $6.25 \%$ | $4.26 \%$ |
| Other | 2 | $6.25 \%$ | $4.26 \%$ |
| $*$ total >100\% because of multiple answers |  |  |  |

Table 11: Data on Type of Conversions Tracked

## Source of E-Commerce Revenue

Question 21: In which three countries does most of this company's e-commerce business originate? What percentage of annual revenue is generated by each country?
To further understand the impact of Irish e-commerce, companies were asked to explain where its major sources of revenue originated. As the majority who answered were Micro/Irish companies, it follows that most of the revenue generated comes from Ireland. The question was displayed to all participants as an open-ended form. It first asked for the top three countries and then inserted those entered responses into the next form asking for revenue generated by each country.

With a total of 30 responses, $83 \%$ ( 25 of 30 ) of businesses listed Ireland as the number one source of revenue. Ireland alone generates an average of 84\% of those companies' revenue. An additional 13\% (4 of 30 ) of respondents listed the United States as the number one location source for revenue with the country generating $71 \%$ of those companies' revenue. Table 13 displays the percentage of participants who chose Ireland, the United Kingdome, or the United States as the number one geographic source of company online revenue. Table 12 shows how many companies entered Ireland, the United Kingdom, and the United States in one of the top three country sources of e-commerce revenue. From each of those responses, an average percentage of revenue was then calculated. With 28 respondents listing Ireland as one of the top three countries, $76 \%$ of revenue for these companies comes from Ireland. There were 18 respondents who listed the United Kingdom in the top 3, and these companies had an average of $14.80 \%$ of revenue derived from that location. Other countries listed in the top 3 included Canada (2), Denmark (1), France (1), Germany (4), Northern Ireland (1), and the Netherlands (1).

| Ireland | $83.33 \%$ |
| :--- | :---: |
| USA | $13.33 \%$ |
| UK | $3.33 \%$ |
| Responses | 30 |

Table 13: Percent Revenue from Top Country

|  | \% | Responses |
| :--- | :---: | :---: |
| Ireland | $75.78 \%$ | 28 |
| UK | $14.80 \%$ | 18 |
| USA | $39.19 \%$ | 8 |

Table 12: Revenue from Countries Listed in Top 3

Question 29: Rank the following channels in the order in which they generate sales for this company. As another means of understanding where sales originated for e-commerce companies competing in Ireland, this question was displayed to all participants as an optional, ranking question. Participants were asked to click and drag answer choices into the proper order, according to their opinion. The 9 different answer choices for ranking can be seen in Table 14 along with the associated mean.

Respondents were asked to rank the 9 different channels in order from the channel which generated the most sales (1) to the channel that generated the least (9). An average for each channel option was then taken from the rankings of 22 responses. Coded, the average closest to 1 is the option that was considered the most important, and the average closest to 9 is the channel with the least importance. A t-test was

| From Most Important Impact on Sales to Least Important |  |
| :--- | :---: |
|  | Mean |
| Direct traffic | 1.82 |
| Search engine traffic | 1.95 |
| Email newsletter | 4.68 |
| Referral traffic from other websites | 5.00 |
| Facebook | 5.09 |
| Paid search engine traffic from Google AdWords | 5.55 |
| Other social media (ie. Twitter, YouTube) | 6.14 |
| Paid search engine traffic from other search engines | 6.41 |
| Affiliate | 8.36 |

Table 14: Importance of Channels on Sales conducted to determine whether or not the means between each of the channels were significantly different to allow for the establishment of an actual ranking order. With a hypothesis that there was no difference, a p-value of greater than .05 proved that hypothesis false meaning that there is a statistically significant difference between the means of each channel. While the top two were relatively close in ranking, email newsletter followed at a distant third with most others not far behind. Affiliate was noticeably last with $64 \%$ of respondents raking it in the $9^{\text {th }}$ position.

## Market Size

Question 22: In your opinion, what is the annual value in Euro of the previously specified industry's subspecialisation's online market in Ireland?
Question 23: In your opinion, in terms of annual revenue generated in Euro, how much is the total online and offline industry sub-specialisation market in Ireland worth?
These questions were asked in hopes of getting an estimated size for the total, as well as online only, market for specific sub-industries in Ireland. From these numbers, gathered from those participating in the industry, companies would be able to better benchmark market share and other performance metrics. However, displayed to all participants as an optional open-ended question, there were only 28 responses. Additionally, $67.86 \%$ (19 of 28 ) responded with 'Don't Know.' Because of the small number of responses, with minimal values for each individual industry, an average online market size was not able to be generated for specific sub-industries.

## Expenditures

The following three questions relate to company expenditures as it pertains to the e-commerce website. The questions were displayed to all participants as optional, open-ended form questions. All of the cost information discussed is deals specifically with Micro/Irish companies.

Question 24: How much did the company spend in Financial Year 2010 on online marketing efforts? The question was broken down with the following forms for text entries: 'Total online marketing spend,' ‘Google AdWords' spend, 'Search Engine Optimisation' (SEO), and' Facebook advertising.' With 15 responses, an average of $€ 4,477$ was established for total online spending. However, there was quite a large range of spending from $€ 55$ to $€ 17,500$. With 14 responses, companies spend an average of $€ 1,338$ on Google AdWords. Table 15 exhibits spending information related to marketing conducted online for the e-commerce site. When asked to describe other online marketing efforts, respondents entered the following: organic SEO and link building, advertising on parent websites, and maintaining a social media presence.

|  | Total | Google AdWords | Search Engine Optimisation | Facebook Advertising |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Average | $€ 4,477$ | $€ 1,338$ | $€ 3,514$ | $€ 444$ |
| Minimum | $€ 55$ | $€ 15$ | $€ 500$ | $€ 50$ |
| Maximum | $€ 17,500$ | $€ 3,000$ | $€ 15,000$ | $€ 1,000$ |
| Responses | 15 | 14 | 7 | 8 |

Table 15: Online Marketing Spending
Question 25: How much did the company spend in Financial Year 2010 on offline marketing efforts for the website?
Entry responses were separated into the following forms: 'Total offline marketing spend,' 'Television,' 'Radio,' and 'Newspapers.' With 9 responses, there was an average of $€ 3,911$ total offline marketing spend for company e-commerce websites, again with a large range in spending amounts. Table 15 shows the averages and ranges of the remaining offline marketing expenditures. Asked to describe other offline marketing efforts, responses included: leaflet drops, trade shows, magazine advertisements and public relations efforts.

|  | Total | Television | Radio | Newspapers |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Average | $€ 3,911$ | $€ 8,567$ | $€ 500$ | $€ 1,872$ |
| Minimum | $€ 250$ | $€ 300$ | $€ 500$ | $€ 250$ |
| Maximum | $€ 21,400$ | $€ 21,400$ | $€ 500$ | $€ 9,000$ |
| Responses | 9 | 3 | 1 | 9 |

Table 16: Offline Marketing Spending for Website

Question 26: How much did the company spend in Financial Year 2010 on website overhead costs? Participants were asked to input spending in regards to the following: 'Total website overhead costs,' 'Web development and design,' 'Website maintenance,' 'Hosting related costs,' 'Transaction related fees,' and 'Website staffing costs.' With 22 responses, companies spend an average of $€ 5,751$ on total website overhead costs, more than either online or offline marketing efforts. With 6 responses, companies spent an average of $€ 15,333$ on website staffing costs. The remaining spending averages, as well as the ranges of expenditures related to website overhead for e-commerce sites, can be seen in Table 17. When asked about any other website costs, one respondent replied that the company spends $€ 20,000$ on back end software.

|  | Total | Web <br> Development <br> \& Design | Website <br> Maintenance | Hosting and <br> Hosting <br> Related Costs | Transaction <br> Related <br> Fees | Website <br> Staffing <br> Costs |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Average | $€ 5,751$ | $€ 3,398$ | $€ 1,673$ | $€ 645$ | $€ 2,357$ | $€ 15,333$ |
| Minimum | $€ 40$ | $€ 20$ | $€ 50$ | $€ 40$ | $€ 90$ | $€ 500$ |
| Maximum | $€ 42,000$ | $€ 15,000$ | $€ 7,000$ | $€ 5,000$ | $€ 12,000$ | $€ 35,000$ |
| Responses | 22 | 14 | 12 | 25 | 18 | 6 |

Table 17: Spending on Website Overhead Costs

## Support Programs

The following questions pertain to different potential efforts a company could take to support, promote, or enhance its e-commerce website and customer experience. All questions in this section were displayed to all participants but were optional to answer.

Question 27: Does this company use Google AdWords?
Asked as a multiple choice question with a single answer option, participants could choose 'Yes' or 'No.' There were 31 total responses and $55 \%$ ( 17 of 30 ) of company respondents use Google AdWords. The remaining $45 \%$ ( 14 of 30 ) of respondents do not use Google AdWords to have the company website appear as a sponsored link in Google search results.

Question 28: What was the Financial Year 2010 conversion rate for Google AdWords?
This open-ended question was displayed only to those survey participants who chose 'Yes' as the answer choice in the previous question on whether or not the company uses AdWords. Although there were only 9 responses, these produced an average conversion rate of $2.74 \%$. Of those user visits driven to the site by Google AdWords, only $2.74 \%$ were converted into purchases.

Question 29: Does this company have an affiliate program?
Presented to participants as a multiple choice question with a single answer option, the choices included: ‘Yes,' 'No,' ‘Don’t know what an affiliate program is,' and 'No - plan to launch one in the next 12 months.' Of the total 30 responses, only $7 \%$ (2 of 30) companies currently have an affiliate program. Seen in Figure 8, the majority of respondents at $80 \%$ ( 24 of 30 ) currently do not have an affiliate program and have no plans to launch one in the near future.


Figure 8: Use of Affiliate Programs


Figure 9: Use of a Social Commerce Store

Question 39: Does this company have a blog?
Similar to previous questions, this was asked in multiple choice format in which participants could select a single answer. As seen in Figure 10, choices included: 'Yes,' 'No,' 'Don't know what a blog is,' and 'No plan to launch one in the next 12 months.' Of the 31 responses, every participant knew what a blog was; however, a majority $58 \%$ (18 of 31), do not currently have a blog. The remaining $42 \%$ ( 13 of 31 ) either currently operate a blog (29\%) or plan to launch one in the next year (13\%).


Figure 10: Use of Company Blog

Question 40: Does this company have a newsletter it sends to customers?
The last support program examined was the use of a company newsletter. This question only had the answer choices of 'Yes' or 'No.' The majority of respondents at $61 \%$ (19 of 31 ) do have a company newsletter that is sent out to customers.

Question 41: How many subscribers has this newsletter produced?


This question was displayed only to participating companies who publish a company newsletter based off the answer to the previous question. It was multiple choice and participants could choose a single answer choice between the following subscription numbers: '<100,' '100-500,' ‘501-1000,' '1001-3000,' ‘3001-10000,' '10000+.' Figure 11 shows that $56 \%$ of respondents (10 of 18) have less than 1000 subscribers and $22 \%$ have between 1000 and 3000 newsletter subscriptions.

Figure 11: Amount of Company Newsletter Subscribers

## Social Media

The following group of questions relates to social media participation and usage by the responding companies. Because the area of social media has become an increasingly important factor in online strategies for companies, the survey sought to find statistics and information relevant to the ecommerce sector in Ireland. All questions in this section were optional.

Question 30: Does this company have a Facebook and /or Twitter account? The first question posed asked whether or not companies were using either of the two most popular platforms. The question was multiple choice. Participants could choose one option from the following: 'Facebook \& Twitter,' 'Facebook only,' ‘Twitter only,' and 'Neither.' There were 31 company responses to the question, and a majority of respondents at $65 \%$ (20 of 31) operate both Facebook \& Twitter company accounts. However, seen in Figure 12, there are still $13 \%$ ( 4 of 31 ) of responding companies who have neither a Facebook nor


Figure 12: Use of Facebook and Twitter Twitter account.

Question 31: How important to your online business is this company's Facebook page?
Displayed only to those participants who selected 'Facebook \& Twitter' or 'Facebook Only' previously, the question was presented as a 5-point Likert scale. The range was from 'Not at all important' to 'Extremely important' and was coded from 1 to 5 respectively. From the 24 responses, an average of 3.58 was calculated. A t-test was conducted to compare the calculated average against 3 , the neutral Likert scale position of 'Neither unimportant nor important.' The hypothesis performed assumed no difference, and a p-value of less than .05 supported the tested hypothesis. Therefore, these company respondents have neutral feelings as to the importance of how Facebook impacts online business.

Question 32: How important to your online business is this company's Twitter account?
A similar question was asked in regards to company Twitter profiles. The question was again displayed only to those survey participants who had previously selected that the company operates a Twitter account. It was again presented in a 5-point Likert scale format with the same options. From the 22 responses, an average of 2.73 was obtained. Another t-test was conducted to compare this average against the neutral average of 3 which was 'Neither important nor unimportant' on the Likert scale. The hypothesis of the test assumed no difference and a p-value greater than .05 meant the hypothesis could not be confirmed. Therefore, the actual average is statistically significantly less than 3 and falls in the 'Very unimportant' area on the scale. Companies do not currently see a significant importance of a Twitter account on online business.

Question 33: How often does this company use Facebook and/or Twitter?
To see how much time and energy Irish e-commerce companies are placing on these two social media platforms, a frequency of usage was requested. This question was not displayed to those participants who selected 'Neither' in response to the question of whether or not the company had a Facebook and/or Twitter account. Presented as a multiple choice question, participants could choose one of the options displayed in the legend of Figure 13. According to the 27 responses obtained, Irish e-commerce companies using Facebook and Twitter do so with minimal frequency. There were $37 \%$ (10 of 27) of companies who use Facebook and/or Twitter less than once a week, and 41\% (11 of 27) of respondents use Facebook and/or Twitter approximately 10 times per week.


Figure 13: Frequency of Social Media Use

Question 34: How many Twitter followers does this company have? Posed as an open-ended question, this was only presented to participants who had previously selected that the company had a Twitter account. Based off of 20 responses, Micro/Irish companies with a Twitter account have an average of 257 followers.

Question 35: How many Facebook fans does this company have?
Only shown to those participants who previously selected the company operated a Facebook page, the question allowed for an open-ended text entry. Derived from 24 responses, Irish companies with less than 10 employees have an average of 509 Facebook fans.

Question 36: Does this company advertise through Facebook?
Again, only displayed to participants who had selected that the company had a Facebook page, the question allowed for a 'Yes' or 'No' response. According to 25 responses, $40 \%$ (10 of 25) of companies advertise through Facebook. The remaining $60 \%$ (15 of 25) of survey participants, who have a Facebook account, do not advertise through the platform.

Question 37: What was the company's Facebook click-through-rate in Financial Year 2010? Displayed only to those participants who selected previously that the company advertises through Facebook, there were only 5 responses to the open-ended question. Because the response entries were inconsistent - some companies gave the actual number of clicks, and some entered a percentage - and the small sample size, researchers were unable to report relevant information for this question.

Question 39: Why does this company use social media channels (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, etc)? This question was displayed to all participants as the researchers did not want to exclude survey participants who use social media forms other than Facebook and Twitter. Presented as a multiple choice question, respondents could choose multiple answers from the following list: 'Building brand awareness,' 'Building relationships,' 'Listening and monitoring,' 'Commenting,' and’ Gathering customer information.' Selections for each answer choice can be seen below in Figure 14.


Figure 14: Reasons Companies use Social Media

|  | $\mathbf{N}$ | \% of Responses * | \% of Answers* |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Building brand awareness | 20 | $66.67 \%$ | $31.25 \%$ |
| Building relationships | 19 | $63.33 \%$ | $29.69 \%$ |
| Listening and monitoring | 11 | $36.67 \%$ | $17.19 \%$ |
| Commenting | 9 | $30.00 \%$ | $14.06 \%$ |
| Gathering customer information | 5 | $16.67 \%$ | $7.81 \%$ |
|  |  |  |  |

Table 18: Percentage Breakdown of Reasons for Social Media Use
AMAS recently conducted a survey which asked marketers why they used social media. The Irish ECommerce Survey solicited the same information. It used the same answer choices in order to understand if those dealing primarily with the e-commerce side of business, in small companies, would feel the same. While this survey had significantly fewer respondents to the question, interestingly, the ranking of reasons to use social media followed a similar pattern. With a total of 30 responses, the majority of respondents at $57 \%$ ( 17 of 30 ) use social media for multiple reasons while $13 \%$ ( 4 of 30 ) do not use social media at all. The 2 most frequent uses of social media were 'Building brand awareness,' selected by $67 \%$ (20 of 30 ) of respondents, and 'Building relationships,' selected by $63 \%$ ( 19 of 30 ) of respondents. For full details of why companies use social media, refer to Table 18.

## Outsource

Question 42: What areas of online business does this company outsource?
Because e-commerce is a new method of conducting businesses for many Irish companies, there are areas companies may not feel comfortable handling in-house. Therefore, this question was asked to determine which areas companies are outsourcing to other firms. As it was relevant to all participants, there were no restrictions on who saw the questions. It was displayed as a multiple choice question, and survey respondents could choose multiple options from the following list: 'Graphic design,' ‘Online marketing,' 'E-commerce


Figure 15: Website Services Outsourced development,' 'Email marketing,' 'Content writing,' and 'None.' Derived from 22 responses, and seen in Figure 15, the top 2 areas outsourced were 'Graphic design' with $59 \%$ ( 13 of 22) of respondents' selections and 'E-commerce development' with $50 \%$ (11 of 22) of respondents selecting it as an area to outsource. There were 2 participating companies who do not outsource any of the above tasks.

## Challenges

Question 43: What is the biggest challenge this company faces in operating an e-commerce site? Because e-commerce is a relatively new means of conducting business for small Irish companies, and it is increasingly important, the researchers asked for insight into the challenges companies are facing with the operation of the site. The question was displayed to all participants and received 27 responses to the open-ended essay question. Answers were coded by the researchers by grouping similar keywords responses. The coded results were then entered into Wordle to produce a word cloud (Figure 16) illustrating the frequency of terms used to describe company challenges. Seen below, main issues center on SEO and search rankings as well as marketing within small budgets.


Figure 16: Challenges Faced Operating E-Commerce Websites

## Results: Grouped Questions

## Headquarters and Size

Of the 64 participants who responded to the questions regarding headquarters and company size, 51 respondents ( $80 \%$ ) were companies headquartered in Ireland with less than 10 employees. Table 19 exhibits the remaining breakdown. This percentage increases through the survey with $94 \%$ ( 31 of 33) of companies who responded to questions regarding e-commerce statistics (website turnover, orders, visits) being micro companies headquartered in Ireland.

|  |  | Headquarters |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| $\underset{*}{*} \boldsymbol{N}$ |  | Ireland | United <br> States | United <br> Kingdom | Total |
|  | Micro | 51 | 0 | 1 | 52 |
|  | Small | 7 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
|  | Large <br> $>250$ | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
|  | Total | 60 | 2 | 2 | 64 |

Table 19: Company Headquarters \& Size

## \% of Revenue from Online

When taking the average website turnover of the Micro/Irish companies and dividing it by the average total turnover of those same companies, it is determined that over a quarter (29\%) of total revenue comes from online sales. When including companies of other sizes but still headquartered in Ireland, the percentage drops to $17 \%$. Table

|  | Micro/Ireland | Ireland |
| :--- | :---: | :---: |
| Offline Turnover | $€ 183,346$ | $€ 208,678.52$ |
| Online Turnover | $€ 81,893$ | $€ 81,473.48$ |
| Total | $€ 265,239.13$ | $€ 290,152.00$ |
| \% Online | $30.88 \%$ | $28.08 \%$ |
| Responses | 23 | 25 |

Table 20: Percentage of Revenue from Online 20 and Figure 17 display information regarding only those companies that input information for both total online turnover and e-commerce website turnover. The percentage of revenue from online sales for Micro/Ireland companies is $31 \%$, based off of 23 responses. Considering the same for all Irish based companies, the percentage of revenue from online sales is $28 \%$, according to 25 responses.

## Turnover by Industry

For analysis purposes, it was difficult


Figure 17: Online \& Offline Company Turnover to break down total and e-commerce turnover by industry because of the limited number of responses. The 'Charity/Non-Profit' and 'Health \& Beauty' industries each only had one response in regards to turnover questions. The 'Sports \& Outdoors' and 'Travel \& Tourism' industries each only had 2 responses. The 'Home \& Garden' industry had the most responses with 7 pertaining to total turnover and 6 related to website turnover. From these numbers, an average total turnover of $€ 317,828.57$ and average web turnover of $€ 79,800.00$ were calculated, meaning $25 \%$ of company sales came from online. For a full breakdown, refer to Table 21.

|  | Offline Turnover | Online Turnover | $\mathbf{N}$ | Total Turnover | $\mathbf{N}$ | $\%$ from Web |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Apparel | $€ 138,176.83$ | $€ 23,489.83$ | 5 | $€ 161,666.67$ | 3 | $14.53 \%$ |
| Charity/Non Profit | $€ 0$ | $€ 43,000$ | 1 | $€ 43,000$ | 1 | $100.00 \%$ |
| Electronics | $€ 32,768.22$ | $€ 52,231.78$ | 5 | $€ 85,000.00$ | 3 | $61.45 \%$ |
| F\&B | $€ 1,470,500.00$ | $€ 39,500.00$ | 1 | $€ 1,510,000.00$ | 1 | $2.62 \%$ |
| Health \& Beauty | $€ 0$ | $€ 52,000$ | 1 | $€ 52,000$ | 1 | $100.00 \%$ |
| Home \& Garden | $€ 238,028.57$ | $€ 79,800.00$ | 6 | $€ 317,828.57$ | 7 | $25.11 \%$ |
| Niche Retail | $€ 80,808.67$ | $€ 160,858.00$ | 5 | $€ 241,666.67$ | 3 | $66.56 \%$ |
| Online Services | $€ 46,500.00$ | $€ 156,000.00$ | 3 | $€ 202,500.00$ | 4 | $77.04 \%$ |
| Sports \& Outdoor | $€ 142,472.50$ | $€ 50,000$ | 1 | $€ 192,472.50$ | 2 | $25.98 \%$ |
| Travel \& Tourism | $€ 0$ | $€ 85,000$ | 2 | $€ 85,000$ | 2 | $100.00 \%$ |

Table 21: Online \& Offline Turnover by Industry

## Conversion Rate and Basket Value by Industry

A similar problem was encountered when determining conversion rate and basket value by specific industry. As shown in Table 22, five of the industries only had one response in relation to conversion rate. 'Home \& Garden' had 6 responses with an average conversion rate of 2.09\%. 'Apparel,' 'Electronics,' and 'Niche Retail' each had 5 responses, making for averages of $1.56 \%, 1.92 \%$, and $2.32 \%$ respectively. Again, with 6 responses, it was determined that the 'Home \& Garden' industry had an average basket value of $€ 101.51$ in Financial Year 2010. With 5 responses each, 'Apparel' had an average

|  | CR | $\mathbf{N}$ | Basket Value | $\mathbf{N}$ |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Apparel | $1.56 \%$ | 5 | $€ 67.57$ | 5 |
| Charity/Non Profit | $3.21 \%$ | 1 | $€ 79.63$ | 1 |
| Electronics | $1.92 \%$ | 5 | $€ 56.89$ | 4 |
| F\&B | $1.58 \%$ | 1 | $€ 293.45$ | 2 |
| Health \& Beauty | $1.20 \%$ | 1 | $€ 83.33$ | 1 |
| Home \& Garden | $2.09 \%$ | 6 | $€ 101.51$ | 6 |
| Niche Retail | $2.32 \%$ | 5 | $€ 120.40$ | 5 |
| Online Services | $1.53 \%$ | 3 | $€ 146.67$ | 3 |
| Sports \& Outdoor | $3.60 \%$ | 1 |  | 0 |
| Travel \& Tourism | $0.45 \%$ | 1 | $€ 50.00$ | 1 |

Table 22: Conversion Rate \& Basket Value by Industry basket value of $€ 67.57$, and 'Niche Retail' had an average basket value of $€ 120.40$.

## Future Research

After the release of the full report, the survey will be re-launched and remain open to continue to collect information pertaining to the 2010 Financial Year. Because e-commerce is rapidly changing and has high growth and revenue potential, the Irish E-Commerce Survey will also be conducted annually to monitor and report on the sector. However, in future years, there will be two separate surveys, one focusing on e-commerce information and one pertaining strictly to social media usage.

Also, it was the researchers' hope to gauge how social media usage affected e-commerce performance. However, due to the small sample size, any cross-analysis between questions was difficult. The results would not have been significant making them invalid and unreliable. Therefore, there is potential for a future study to further understand the interaction between social media usage and e-commerce performance to understand whether or not the integration of a social media into an e-commerce strategy impacts the bottom line for Irish companies.

## Appendix A: Questionnaire

Irish E-Commerce Survey
Thank you for participating in this survey. Please note, your responses are completely anonymous, and the data collected will be stored securely. Answers will be used to develop statistical reports regarding the state of Irish e-commerce.

Please also note, the survey is for the 2010 Financial Year, and all responses should be in Euro where applicable.

It is recommended to have the following e-commerce information accessible before beginning the survey - total website turnover, total orders, and total visits.

If you operate more than one e-commerce website, you may fill out this survey once for all websites, or separately for each website you operate. Later in the survey, you will be asked to indicate whether the data you provide is aggregated or not.

Your time and insights are greatly appreciated.

In which general industry sector does this company compete?
O Apparel
O Charity / Non-Profit
O Electronics
O Entertainment
O Financial Services
O Food and Beverage
O Health and Beauty
O Home and Garden
O Niche Retail
O Office Supply
O Online Services
O Sports and Outdoor
O Travel and Tourism
O Other $\qquad$

What areas of specialisation within the Apparel sector does this company compete?
$\square$ Women's
$\square$ Shoes
$\square$ Intimate Apparel
$\square$ Jewellery and Accessories
$\square$ Kid's
$\square$ Men's
$\square$ Other $\qquad$

What areas of specialisation within the Charity / Non-Profit sector does this company compete?
$\square$ Civic, Social, and Youth Organisation
$\square$ Philanthropic Organisation
$\square$ Religious Organisation
$\square$ Social Advocacy Organisation
$\square$ Other $\qquad$

What areas of specialisation within the Electronics sector does this company compete?
$\square$ Cameras
C Computing and Accessories
$\square$ Gaming
$\square$ Home Entertainment
$\square$ Phones and Accessories
$\square$ Other $\qquad$

What areas of specialisation within the Entertainment sector does this company compete?
$\square$ Art
$\square$ Books

- Movies
$\square$ Music
$\square$ Theatre
$\square$ Other $\qquad$

What areas of specialisation within the Financial Services sector does this company compete?
[ Accounting Services

- Company Formations
- Consulting
- Insurance
- Tax
[ Other $\qquad$

What areas of specialisation within the Food and Beverage sector does this company compete?

- Beer and Wine
- Confectionery
- Gourmet
- Groceries
- Hampers
- Organic
- Other $\qquad$

What areas of specialisation within the Heath and Beauty sector does this company compete?

- Organic
- Bath and Body
- Fragrance
] Health-care
- Makeup and Cosmetics
- Other $\qquad$

What areas of specialisation within the Home and Garden sector does this company compete?
D Do-lt-Yourself and Tools
E Electrical and Home Appliances

- Furniture

G Garden and Outdoor

- Kitchenware
- Soft Furnishings
- Other $\qquad$

What areas of specialisation within the Niche Retail sector does this company compete?

- Antiques
$\square$ Arts and Crafts
- Flowers
$\square$ Gifts
$\square$ Pets
$\square$ Special Occasions
$\square$ Other $\qquad$

What areas of specialisation within the Office Supply sector does this company compete?

- Furniture
$\square$ Gadgets
$\square$ Stationary
$\square$ Supplies
$\square$ Other $\qquad$

What areas of specialisation within the Online Services sector does this company compete?
$\square$ Online Dating

- Software Products / Licenses
$\square$ Telecommunications
$\square$ Internet Service Providers
$\square$ Hosting Services
$\square$ Online Auctions
$\square$ Online Education Courses
$\square$ Other $\qquad$

What areas of specialisation within the Sports and Outdoor sector does this company compete?
$\square$ Equipment
$\square$ Exercise and Fitness
$\square$ Sports and Leisurewear
$\square$ Other $\qquad$

What areas of specialisation within the Travel and Tourism sector does this company compete?
[. Destination
[ Flights
[ Hotel

- Trip Planning
- Other $\qquad$

What area(s) of specialisation within the previously selected industry does this company compete?

Where is this company headquartered?
O Ireland
O United States
O United Kingdom
O Other $\qquad$

In terms of number of employees, what is the size of this company?
O Micro
O Small
O Medium
O Large >250

What was the company's total online and offline turnover in Euro for Financial Year 2010? (Please remember this survey is completely anonymous, and this question is optional should you not wish to answer)

## Participant's Experience

How many years have you worked for this company?

How many years experience do you have in the previously specified industry?

How long has this company operated an e-commerce website?

What analytics software does this company use?
O Google Analytics
O Statcounter
O Adobe Omniture
O Idon't know
O Other $\qquad$

Does this company have e-commerce tracking within the analytics package?
O Yes
O No
O Idon't know
O Yes, but we don't use it
O No, but we plan to get it within the next 12 months

What was the turnover through the website(s) in Financial Year 2010? (Euro)

What was the traffic in terms of total visits in Financial Year 2010 to the company's website(s)?

How many total orders were transacted through the website(s) in Financial Year 2010?

What was the average conversion rate for this company's website(s) in Financial Year 2010? (As a percentage)

What was the average basket value for this company's website(s) in Financial Year 2010? (Euro)

What was the total bounce rate for this company's website(s) in Financial Year 2010?

What was the average number of pages viewed per visit on the company's website(s)?

What was the average time spent on the company's website(s) per visit?

What conversions do the website(s) track?
$\square$ Sales
$\square$ Subscriptions
$\square$ Donations
$\square$ Registrations
$\square$ Reservations

- Ticket Sales
- Voucher Sales
$\square$ Other $\qquad$

In which three countries does most of this company's e-commerce business originate? What percentage of annual revenue is generated by each country?

Country 1
Country 2
Country 3

In your opinion, what is the annual value in Euro of the specialised industry's online market in Ireland? (i.e. your sub-specialisation)

In your opinion, in terms of annual revenue generated in Euro, how much is the total online and offline specialised market in Ireland worth? (i.e. your sub-specialisation)

How much did the company spend in Financial Year 2010 on online marketing efforts? (Euro)
Total Online Marketing Spend
Google Adwords
Search Engine Optimisation
Facebook Advertising
Describe any other online marketing efforts:

How much did the company spend in Financial Year 2010 on offline marketing efforts for the website? (Euro)

Total Offline Marketing Spend
Television
Radio
Newspapers
Describe any other offline marketing efforts:

How much did the company spend in Financial Year 2010 on website overhead costs? (Euro)
Total Website Overhead Costs
Web Development \& Design
Website Maintenance
Hosting and Hosting Related Costs
Transaction Related Fees
Website Staffing Costs
Any other costs?

Does this company use Google AdWords?
O Yes
O No

What was the Financial Year 2010 conversion rate for Google AdWords?

Does this company have an affiliate program?

O Yes
O No
O I don't know what an affiliate program is
O No, but we plan to launch one within the next 12 months

Rank these channels in the order in which they generate sales for this company. (Most to Least)
$\qquad$ Direct traffic
___ Search engine traffic Paid search engine traffic from Google AdWords
___ Paid search engine traffic from other search engines (i.e. Yahoo, Bing) Email newsletter
___ Facebook
Social Media (i.e. Twitter, YouTube, etc)
___ Referral traffic from other websites
___ Affiliate

Does this company have a Facebook and / or Twitter account?
O Facebook and Twitter
O Twitter Only
O Facebook Only
O Neither

How important to your online business is this company's Facebook page?
O Not at all Important
O Very Unimportant
O Neither Important nor Unimportant
O Very Important
O Extremely Important

How important to your online business is this company's Twitter account?
O Not at all Important
O Very Unimportant
O Neither Important nor Unimportant
O Very Important
O Extremely Important

How often does this company use Facebook and / or Twitter?
O Less than Once a Week
O 10 Times a Week
O 11-50 Times a Week
O 50+ Times a Week

How many Twitter followers does this company have?

How many Facebook fans does this company have?

Does this company advertise through Facebook?
O Yes
O No

What was the company's Facebook click-through-rate in Financial Year 2010?

Does this company currently run a social e-commerce store? (For example, e-commerce within Facebook)

O Yes
O No
O I don't know what a social e-commerce store is
O No, but we plan to launch one in the next 12 months

Does this company have a blog?
O Yes
O No
O I don't know what a blog is
O No, but we plan to launch one in the next 12 months

Why does this company use social media channels (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, etc)?

- Building brand awareness
- Building relationships
- Commenting
- Gathering customer information
- Listening and monitoring
- Other

The company does not use social media

Does this company have a newsletter it sends to customers?
O Yes
O No

How many subscribers has this newsletter produced?
O
O 100-500
O 501-1000
O 1001-3000
O 3001-10000
O 10000+

What areas of online business does this company outsource?

- Graphic design
- Online marketing
- E-commerce development
- Email marketing
- Content writing
- Other $\qquad$

What is the biggest challenge this company faces is operating an e-commerce site?

If you would like to receive a personalised report that includes your company's statistics to compare to industry and country averages, please enter your email address below. Please not this is entirely confidential, and we will not use your email for any other reason than to send the report.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey on the state of Irish e-commerce. Please allow 3 weeks for survey analysis and report generation. If you have requested a personalised report, it will be sent to the e-mail address provided. Otherwise, a general report will be posted on www.irishecommercesurvey.com.

## Appendix B: Sub-Industry Breakdown

| Specialisation Category | N | \% of Responses* | \% of Answers* |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Apparel |  |  |  |
| Women's | 3 | 30.00\% | 25.00\% |
| Shoes | 1 | 10.00\% | 8.33\% |
| Jewellery and Accessories | 2 | 20.00\% | 16.67\% |
| Kid's | 3 | 30.00\% | 25.00\% |
| Men's | 2 | 20.00\% | 16.67\% |
| Other | 1 | 10.00\% | 8.33\% |
| Charity / Non-Profit |  |  |  |
| Other | 1 | 100.00\% | 100.00\% |
| Electronics |  |  |  |
| Cameras | 2 | 28.57\% | 11.11\% |
| Computing and Accessories | 4 | 57.14\% | 22.22\% |
| Gaming | 2 | 28.57\% | 11.11\% |
| Home Entertainment | 4 | 57.14\% | 22.22\% |
| Phones and Accessories | 4 | 57.14\% | 22.22\% |
| Other | 2 | 28.57\% | 11.11\% |
| Food and Beverage |  |  |  |
| Beer and Wine | 4 | 66.67\% | 66.67\% |
| Gourmet | 1 | 16.67\% | 16.67\% |
| Other | 1 | 16.67\% | 16.67\% |
| Health and Beauty |  |  |  |
| Fragrance | 1 | 50.00\% | 33.33\% |
| Makeup and Cosmetics | 1 | 50.00\% | 33.33\% |
| Other | 1 | 50.00\% | 33.33\% |
| Home and Garden |  |  |  |
| Furniture | 2 | 33.33\% | 18.18\% |
| Garden and Outdoor | 2 | 33.33\% | 18.18\% |
| Kitchenware | 1 | 16.67\% | 9.09\% |
| Soft Furnishings | 4 | 66.67\% | 36.36\% |
| Other | 2 | 33.33\% | 18.18\% |
| Niche Retail |  |  |  |
| Arts and Crafts | 2 | 28.57\% | 16.67\% |
| Flowers | 1 | 14.29\% | 8.33\% |
| Gifts | 3 | 42.86\% | 25.00\% |
| Special Occasions | 1 | 14.29\% | 8.33\% |
| Other | 5 | 71.43\% | 41.67\% |
| Office Supply |  |  |  |
| Stationary | 1 | 100.00\% | 100.00\% |


| Online Services |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Software Products / Licenses | 1 | 11.11\% | 10.00\% |
| Internet Service Providers | 2 | 22.22\% | 20.00\% |
| Hosting Services | 3 | 33.33\% | 30.00\% |
| Other | 4 | 44.44\% | 40.00\% |
| Sports and Outdoors |  |  |  |
| Equipment | 3 | 50.00\% | 33.33\% |
| Exercise and Fitness | 1 | 16.67\% | 11.11\% |
| Sports and Leisurewear | 1 | 16.67\% | 11.11\% |
| Other | 4 | 66.67\% | 44.44\% |
| Travel and Tourism |  |  |  |
| Hotel | 2 | 100.00\% | 25.00\% |
| Trip Planning | 1 | 50.00\% | 25.00\% |
| Other | 1 | 50.00\% | 25.00\% |
| * total > $100 \%$ because of multiple answers |  |  |  |

Appendix C: Graphs of Conversion Rate and Basket Value by Industry



