

Does Hedonism Matter in Choosing a Medium? : The Case of Instant Messaging

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Abstract

This paper describes how people choose Internet-based media based on their utilitarian and hedonic attributes and then utilizes the theoretical framework for an empirical study conducted in two countries to investigate adoption of Instant Messaging and any cultural differences in such behavior. The empirical results suggest that both Chinese and Americans put higher weight on hedonism than on utilitarianism in their decisions on adopting IM. This indicates that the hedonic attribute of IM is the most salient factor in adoption process, no matter what cultural background the user has. We conclude that promoting hedonic factors in the design of Internet-based media and, seemingly, of Internet-based applications appears to emerge as a very important factor for adoption.

Keywords: Instant Messaging, Attributes Model, Media Choice Across Cultures