

Adoption decision process

1. Knowledge

The knowledge of an innovation occurs when an individual (or other decision-making unit) acknowledges the existence of the innovation and gains some understanding of how it works. They might acknowledge it by accident, such as being told by someone or found in local news or social media. Some active information seekers, such as scholars, actively search for new ideas every day.

The knowledge about an innovation can be principles knowledge, such as knowing how it works, or how-to knowledge, such as knowing how to use it properly.

However, this principle is based on the fact that people are in a place that is open to new information. Some people place themselves in specific communities to get more chance to be exposed to desired knowledge while avoiding undesired knowledge. The selective exposure brings some level of bias.

Knowledge can be affected by prior conditions. It can be based on previous practice, saying that people better know how it works if they have used similar things. Accepting knowledge may depend on the needs or problems. People won't reject the knowledge exposure if it is what they need. The level of innovativeness determines how willing are they to receive new knowledge. Also, adopting a new idea is also subject to the community norms.

It was known that people will acknowledge the existence of innovation earlier if:

- They have more education.
- They have higher social status.
- They have more social participation.
- They have more exposure to interpersonal and mass media communication channels.
- Change agents contact them more frequently.
- They are more cosmopolite (international).

2. Persuasion

Individuals form a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the innovation. At the first stage, individuals perceive the knowledge about the innovation. After that, they will develop attitudes towards it. Individuals cannot form an attitude until they know about that new idea, by the way.

At the persuasion stage, individuals become more involved with the innovation. They will actively seek information about the new idea. The results, whether positive or negative attitudes towards the innovation, can be based on where they seek information, what messages they received, and how they interpret the information received.

3. Decision

The decision occurs when individuals (or other decision-making units) engage in activities that lead to a choice to adopt or reject the innovation. The unit may decide to adopt, which is a decision to make full use of an innovation, not only to try it. Otherwise, the unit may reject the idea, which is a decision not to adopt an innovation.

In fact, most individuals will not adopt an innovation without trying it first. Innovations that allow people to try are generally adopted more rapidly. For things that cannot be tried, people must clearly see its usefulness. And, sometimes, the trial by other people can substitute.

Each stage in the innovation-decision process has a potential rejection point. It is possible to reject an innovation at the knowledge stage by simply forgetting about it after initial awareness. Rejection can occur after a prior decision to adopt. The active rejection is considering adoption of the innovation but then deciding not to. The passive rejection means never considering use of the innovation.

4. Implementation

Implementation occurs when individuals (or decision-making units) put an innovation into use. Before the implementation stage, the innovation-decision process has been a mental exercise. Implementation involves behavior change, as the new idea is put into practice.

By the time people decide to implement the innovation, they should already know where to obtain the innovation, how to use it, and problems that may arise when using it including how to solve them.

Active information seeking usually takes place at the implementation stage. The change agent must also provide technical assistance to the clients during the implementation. Problems of implementation are more serious when the adopter is an organization rather than an individual.

When a number of individuals are involved, the implementers are often a different set of people from the decision makers. The organizational structure may be a resistant force to implementation.

5. Confirmation

A decision to adopt or reject is often not the terminal stage in the innovation-decision process. Individuals (or decision-making units) need reinforcement to continue the adoption. They may reverse their decisions if exposed to conflicting information about the innovation. The confirmation stage continues after the decision to adopt or reject for an indefinite period.

Even with supports, a discontinuance, or a decision to reject an innovation after having previously adopted it, might occur. People may reject an innovation in favor of a better idea. Or they might not have any reasonable answer besides their dissatisfaction. Sometimes, the innovation is prohibited by the law or regulation. The rate of discontinuance was just as important as the rate of adoption in determining the level of adoption at any particular time.

6. Communication channels

Mass media can reach a large audience rapidly. People often create knowledge and spread information via mass media channels. However, these channels often lead to weakly-held attitudes as information changes and updates rapidly. Information can be shared by another person, which can overcome selective exposure and form a strongly held attitude.

Knowledge gained from outside the social system is relatively more important at the knowledge stage. At later stages, new ideas reach individuals from sources inside their social system. This

7. Re-invention

Re-invention is the degree to which an innovation is changed or modified by a user in the process of its adoption and implementation. Re-invention can be good or bad. For example, the change agent was trying to introduce new application software. During the training, some employees found a similar product on the internet. They tried that alternative and found it was usable.

Reference

Rogers, Everett M., Arvind Singhal, and Margaret M. Quinlan. "Diffusion of innovations." *An integrated approach to communication theory and research*. Routledge, 2014. 432-448.