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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to identify the features of the internet used by companies that sale green products on their websites and their corporate profiles on social media, and more specifically on their Facebook page. It also determines how each company chooses to advertise its products through the internet and finally which features of each platform further enhance the promotion of each business. The method which was adopted was the descriptive statistics of data on an Excel spreadsheet and conclusions were drawn through the results of the study. In the future, this research can be utilised and enriched by financial data of companies, in order to succeed better electronic marketing. Furthermore, business owners can improve their digital presence with the existing data and strengthen the criteria and the features that make their products more attractive to potential customers.

Keywords: green products; internet; e-commerce; environmental marketing; green consumers.

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1 Introduction

The business world begins gradually to become an electronic economy, due to the new potentials that are being developed and progressively leading to future success such as, innovations, global competition, the continuously easier access to information as well as the higher educational level of consumers (Andreopoulou et al., 2008).

Internet is now a big part of our everyday life. From the professional point of view, businesses and companies use mainly the internet as a means of development, organisation, advertising, competition and expansion, with profit, as their main goal (Gupta, 2008). Without a doubt, internet has made communication between businesses and consumers more immediate, easy and fast (Rowley, 2001). Additionally, it is possible for companies to expand their geographical boundaries and significantly reduce their costs (Grubb, 2000). It is also remarkable for small and medium businesses the fact that the internet has been a tool of access and continuing presence in markets, dominated by larger companies (Gilmore et al., 2007).

Nowadays, more and more companies produce more green products and pay particular attention to their quality, promotion and advertising. Through this, they are trying to implement corporate social responsibility policies. Internet enables these companies to make their products and services known to a wider audience, promoting an alternative and a «greener» way of consumption. Another huge advantage is that in this way they support employment and growth in rural areas and, redirect financial assistance to productive land use (Karelakis et al. 2020).

In general, it can be admitted that businesses and consumers have a dynamic and reciprocal relationship, significantly influencing each other. Through advertising and the

internet, the trend towards more sustainable practices, green products and services is strengthened. Lexer and Brooks (2005) suggest that “the major issue is the protection of the natural resources and the provision of amenity by the society, in a way that keeps an ecological balance” (Athanasiadis and Andreopoulou, 2015). This paper aims to evaluate the criteria used for the online promotion of greens products, as well as the search for these criteria, which reinforce this promotion.

2 Bibliography review

2.1 *Electronic commerce/E-commerce*

Nowadays, with the advent of technology, the way transactions are made, has been significantly differentiated from the old, traditional way (Gunasekaran and Ngai, 2007). A new and fast way to serve consumers, is carried out through the internet, the so-called e-commerce, which is gaining more and more ground in all markets around the world, even in Greece, but at a slower pace (International Trade Administration, 2021).

According to Kalakota and Whinston (1997), e-commerce is the maintenance of business relationships and the trade of information, services and products through computing telecommunication networks. Although in everyday use, the term ‘e-commerce’ usually refers to marketing of goods and services only via internet, it also includes wider business activity. E-commerce refers to the trade between business and user and between businesses, as well as the internal organisational transactions that support these activities (Kalakota and Whinston, 1997).

As Anderson (2022) suggests, electronic commerce (e-commerce) refers to companies and individuals that buy and sell goods and services over the internet. E-commerce operates in different types of market segments and can be conducted over computers, tablets, smartphones, and other smart devices. Nearly every imaginable product and service is available through e-commerce transactions, including books, music, plane tickets, and financial services such as stock investing and online banking.

E-commerce also suggests the transactions over the phone and fax. It is distinguished into indirect and direct. The first term is used when there is an online order of tangible goods, which can be delivered only in traditional ways, such as mail. Direct e-commerce includes order, payment and delivery of intangible goods and services. The payment for these services is made either by credit cards, or with electronic money, always with the assistance and partnership of banks.

2.2 *Advantages of electronic commerce*

E-commerce presents numerous benefits, which make its presence quite important in the field of trade. Below there is an analysis of the advantages which concern the direct parties, consumers and businesses, but also the wider social public.

2.2.1 *Benefits for consumers*

- global market. The consumers can search for any product they wish, anywhere in the world, as the internet has abolished the presence of borders (Colombo et al., 2013)
- saving time and money

- immediate availability of products or services
- better service, with less waiting time
- more information and feedback
- immediate price and product comparison
- lower prices
- delivery to the consumer.

The buyer makes the purchase of a product electronically and the company is obliged to deliver it to the location indicated by the customer. This is one of the biggest benefits of e-commerce, which significantly facilitates the consumer (Schoenfeldt, 2008).

2.2.2 *Benefits for businesses*

- access to new markets. With the online store, businesses are open to the world market and attract consumers from all over the world
- containment of direct cost and significant reduction of expenses (Niranjanamurthy et al., 2013).
- Monitoring consumer behaviour. The most common method of monitoring consumer behaviour, is the use of cookies. Cookies allow electronic businesses to store information about the profile and the preferences of visitors. Cookies also help businesses to modify their future strategy.
- easier promotion of the company and of its products
- more effective stockpile management and organisation of supply chain. The digital management of the supply chain makes its organisation and monitoring faster, more transparent and more economical. In addition, e-commerce contributes to the moderation of the chain, as the company can avoid the intermediaries and come in direct contact with the consumer, offering the products at lower prices (Niranjanamurthy et al., 2013).
- increase of competitiveness. Online businesses move away from the competition of local market and extend to a global level. In this way, they increase their clientele, strengthen their competitive position and manage to survive the competition in the long run (Piris et al., 2004).

2.2.3 *Benefits for society*

- Benefits for the environment. E-commerce has significantly reduced use of paper, as well as air pollution (even slightly), due to reduced vehicle traffic (Tivary and Singh, 2011).
- Greater transparency. Transactions that take place through e-commerce are more transparent than simple trading transactions and provide a clearer picture of business turnover. The transparency of transactions also contributes to the reduction of tax evasion (Niranjanamurthy et al., 2013).

Despite its many benefits, e-commerce also has some disadvantages that create doubts in companies and consumers. However, for the purposes of this study, focus was on the benefits.

2.3 Electronic business/E-business

According to Glover et al. (2001), electronic business activity (e-business) is ‘the use of computer and electronic communication networks for the exchange of business information and business transactions in electronic form, without the use of paper’. The concept of electronic business goes beyond the broad concept of technology, in order to integrate every aspect of the business (such as strategy, implementation, organisation) and to extend it, beyond its ‘narrow’ and traditional boundaries (Andonov et. al, 2021).

The rapid spread of the internet has brought to light a new kind of business, that does not need to have a physical presence and which attracts many customers and changes a lot, the classic value model of the chain. Merono-Cerdan and Soto Acosta (2005) have located a positive relationship between electronic business and business performance, while it is confirmed that the electronic business is not related to the size of the business, as others argue.

The most important benefits that e-business offers are the enlarged sales opportunities, the easier communication with customers, as well as the improved service. The consumers enjoy similar benefits, as analysed in the e-commerce chapter. Moreover, it is worth mentioning, that electronic networks can facilitate the coordination between different business processes (production, marketing, supply chain), as well as fully meet the requirements of consumers (Badasjane, V. et al., 2022).

2.4 Electronic marketing/ E-marketing

Kotler (1999), perhaps the most famous professor of Marketing, defined electronic marketing as ‘a social and management process, by which individuals and groups acquire everything they need and desire, through the production, the offering and the exchange of value products with other’.

E-marketing is commonly referred to, as a new approach and modern involvement in the marketing of goods, services, information and ideas, through the internet and other electronic means (El-Gohary, 2010). It’s essentially a redefinition of how businesses interact with their customers. Terms such as ‘e-marketing’, ‘online marketing’ and ‘internet marketing’, are interchangeable and can be used for the same purpose, as they are synonyms.

Finally, website promotion techniques are summarised in the following two most important ones: search engine optimisation (SEO), which is constantly developing and evolving, as all the competitors have the same purpose, which is to appear first on search engines (Berry and Browne, 2005; Langville and Meyer, 2006), as well as Social Media Marketing, which includes the use of social media networking, in order to influence the perception of consumers, in the best possible way (Hayes, 2021). It is a strong strategy, which brings easily and quickly large numbers of visitors, as well as recognition of the product and the business itself.

2.5 Green products

Green products are known as eco-friendly or environmentally friendly products. Shamdasani et al. (1993) defined as ‘green products’, those which will not pollute the Earth and its natural resources, while at the same time they can be recycled and preserved. Green products have an environmentally healthy content and packaging with minimal or no environmental impacts (Wandosell, 2021). In other words, these products incorporate recycling strategies, with recyclable content and packaging, as well as the use of as few toxic materials as possible, are trying to decrease the environmental impacts.

Krause (1993) found in his research that consumers were increasingly concerned about their daily habits and the impact they had on the natural environment. Considering that safe food is an essential part in the preventing foodborne illness, and that in the last decade, we are confronted with a dozen food crisis, the public concern about food quality has been intensified in recent years (Maksimovic et al. 2015). As a result, some of them have been able to turn this concern into a real protection for their health and the environment, with a commitment to buy mainly green products (Wandosell, 2021; Martin and Simintiras, 1995).

2.6 Reasons and ways to motivate towards green consumption

Green consumer is defined as “the person who is aware of the issues and the obligations connected to the environment, and is supportive of environmental purposes, to the point where they change their mind about a product or a supplier, even if this entails higher cost” (Law, 2009). The reasons which can motivate someone towards green consumption are:

- health
- taste
- food safety
- local market support
- reduction of environmental impacts
- frequency of purchase.

The two main ways of motivating and enhancing consumers’ purchase intention are initially the eco labels of products and secondly the advertisements that promote this kind of products. Both eco-labels and green advertising first attract the attention and then the interest of the consumer, providing basic information on the quality of green products and services. For the purpose of this study, every reference to green products, implies edible products.

3 Methodology

This chapter describes how the research material was collected and analyses the steps that were followed. The approach of the online presence and promotion of companies, was made by examining companies with green products in the wider region of Thessaloniki,

from September 2019 until April 2020. Thessaloniki is the second largest city in Greece and so there is a variety of products and services. This, of course, creates the great competition that exists among companies, which try to stand out by any means. Therefore, the research material was carefully collected, so that it is as representative as possible.

3.1 *Data collection*

In order to evaluate the promotion of green products, there has been an examination of the online presence of companies providing them, in the area of Thessaloniki. The websites of companies that sell green products, have been collected, as well as the corporate profiles of the companies on social networks and more specifically on Facebook.

Step 1: Collection of websites

In order to find the websites on the internet, a first search was performed on Google search engine, which provides the most satisfactory results, compared to the other existing search engines (Berry and Browne, 2005; Langville and Meyer 2006). The keywords used in the search –as well as and some examples of each category- are shown in the Table 1.

Table 1 List of key words and their contents

<i>Keywords</i>	<i>Category contents</i>
Green products	Green tea, vegetables, green cereal
Organic products	Meat, dairy products, organic rice, wine
Vegan-products	Legumes, chia seeds, mushrooms, avocado
Bio-products	Oil, cannabis, cinnamon sticks
Superfoods	Chia seeds, hippophaes, cranberries, odorless garlic
Herbs	Basil, oregano, rosemary
Ethereal essences	Origanum oil, balsam oil, tea tree oil
Tinctures	Berries, leaves, vinegar, glycerite
Natural foods	Sea food, roots, grains
Traditional products	Jams, preserves
Food supplements	Vitamins, mineral, fibres, herbal extracts

Therefore, searching on Google has revealed a number of companies and thus, an Excel spreadsheet has been created with group ‘A’ of the companies, on which there is an entry with the name of the company, the URL of the company’s website and the type of products each company sells, as shown below.

Step 2: Verification of results with thematic search

In order to enrich the research and to find more companies, the same keywords were used on other sites, such as <https://www.xo.gr/> and <https://www.vrisko.gr/>, as well as on other web pages, such as <http://www.organiclife.gr>, <http://www.veganthessaloniki.gr> and

<https://epaggelmatiesthessalonikh.blogspot.com/>. On these web pages, existing companies are checked and confirmed and new ones are found, in order to optimise the research for group ‘A’. The new companies that appear, are listed on the previously created Excel spreadsheet.

Step 3: Collection of data related to social networks

From the list of the collected websites, there is an identification of whether there are corresponding pages with the same name on the social network of Facebook, or not. In addition, there is a search for more businesses, using the keywords previously used to identify the websites. Moreover, there is simple search on the website of the companies that were initially found, which may already have a Facebook profile and may have a link leading directly to it. Therefore, by collecting the corporate profiles of the companies on Facebook, a second sheet of Excel is created, making a second group, group ‘B’. As in Group A, there is an entry with the name of the company, the URL of the company on Facebook and the description of the products that the company provides.

Step 4: Business evaluation criteria

The method of empirical evaluation of business website content features was based on the evaluation of business website content as presented in a research project by Andreopoulou et al., 2014, 2015 and in Springer’s book (Andreopoulou et al., 2017).

Table 2 Variables attributed to the criteria that are accomplished on corporate websites

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Variables</i>	<i>Criteria</i>
x1	Facebook	x17	Comments-ratings
x2	Other social media	x18	Mini tips-advice
x3	Alternative site language	x19	Special order form
x4	Telephonex	20	Digital payment possibility
x5	Address	x21	History-information about the company
x6	Mail	x22	Company’s year of establishment
x7	Map	x23	Business vision
x8	Popular products	x24	Budget
x9	Product recommendations	x25	Corporate social responsibility
x10	Product offers	x26	Job opportunities
x11	Last arrived products	x27	Year of website establishment
x12	Search for products	x28	Links
x13	Categorization of products	x29	Newsletter
x14	Filter search	x30	Page view number
x15	Multimedia presentation of products	x31	Common questions
x16	Product certifications	x32	Cookies

In order to examine the common type of criteria, that the websites and the profiles of the social networks of the companies have, a qualitative analysis was performed, like in

corresponding papers with similar methodology (Andreopoulou et al., 2008; Andreopoulou et al., 2009; Tsekouropoulos et al., 2012; Koliouka and Andreopoulou, 2013). After that, a quantitative analysis is performed, in order to examine the presence or absence of these criteria. Each group on the two Excel sheets has different criteria. Each sheet presents the company's name on the first column. Also, on the horizontal line, are all the criteria, according to which, each group is examined. Credit 1 is attributed to a cell when the criteria is met, while the absence of the criteria, is attributed credit 0. Two tables are shown below, presenting the variables attributed to the criteria of each group. The Table 2 refers to the group 'A' of the websites, with each criterion being a separate variable with credits from χ_1 to χ_{32} . Whereas, the Table 3 shows the variables of group 'B', with credits from y_1 to y_{24} . Figure 1 also presents an indicative subtotal of the Excel spreadsheet.

Table 3 Variables attributed to the criteria that are accomplished on corporate Facebook profiles

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Variables</i>	<i>Criteria</i>
y1	Website	y13	Multimedia product presentation
y2	Other social media	y14	Regular posts
y3	Alternative site language	y15	Friendly posts
y4	Telephone	y16	Latest news
y5	Address	y17	Advices-suggestions
y6	Mail	y18	Job opportunities
y7	Map	y19	History-information about the company
y8	Followers	y20	Company's year of establishment
y9	Presence notifications (check-in)	y21	Product certifications
y10	Comments-ratings	y22	Business vision
y11	Opening hours	y23	Corporate social responsibility
y12	Date of page creation	y24	Active until today

Step 5: Stages of e-commerce adoption

The introduction of a company in e-commerce is done gradually and the following 4 stages are commonly recognised (Andreopoulou et al., 2009):

- Stage 1: development of a website for the simple promotion of products.
- Stage 2: interactive services.
- Stage 3: digital completion of financial transaction and transaction processing.
- Stage 4: fulfillment of the order and correct distribution of stocks.

Through the data and the information it provides, each company is ranked at the corresponding stage. Each stage represents a certain level of maturity in the use of e-commerce and the degree of utilisation of digital services and tools. In this way, a new variable is created, named 'k', which will be credited from 1–4, depending on the company's stage.

Step 6: Sum of variables

The set of characteristics collected for each business was also studied on both sheets of the Excel table. For each website and company profile on Facebook, the set of criteria is attributed to a new variable, named 't'. For the websites, the variable t1 is used and for Facebook profiles, t2, accordingly. This variable shows the number of criteria that were accomplished. Therefore, the sum of the credits (1) on the horizontal axis gives us the 't' variable. Thus, for the websites, it varies between 1–32 and for Facebook profiles, from 1–24.

3.2 Data processing

Step 7 Statistical analysis and data study

To process the data, statistical analysis of the variables χ_1 – χ_{32} , y_1 – y_{24} and t_1 , t_2 has been carried out and the results are presented in graphs and tables. There, it's shown the percentage of each variable, detected in each group. The representation of the 4 categories in group 'A' is also studied, as well as the two groups in terms of their categorisation, according to the type of products they promote and the areas in which they are based. Finally, there is a study on the percentage of the companies that have both an online corporate profile on Facebook and a website or just a Facebook profile.

4 Results

In this chapter, there is a presentation of the results in the order they were analysed in the Methodology.

4.1 Results of initial search

According to Step 1, after a Google search using keywords, 39 companies that have a website on the Greek internet are initially identified. These are organised, as already mentioned, on an excel spreadsheet and constitute group 'A' of our research.

4.2 Results of thematic search

According to step 2, in order to enrich the research and to confirm the already existing companies, there has been a search with the same keywords, on pages such as www.xo.gr, www.vrisko.gr, etc. This search identified 25 additional companies that were added in group 'A' of sheet 1 created on the excel. Thus, group 'A' now has a total of 64 companies, the information of which will be analysed below (chapter 4.4).

4.3 Results of profiles on social networks

Step 3 of the methodology, the search for companies that sell green products with a corporate profile on the social network of Facebook, reveals numerous results. Initially, 33 companies with Facebook profiles are easily identified from their website. After using the keywords or profile suggestions that appear on Facebook, 21 additional companies

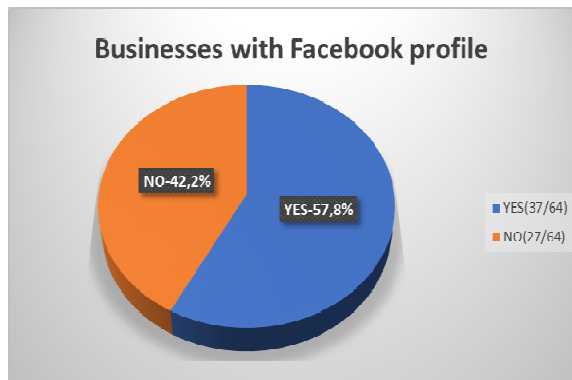
are identified, which, however, do not have a website, but only a corporate profile on Facebook. Therefore, a total of 54 companies with Facebook profiles were identified, as presented on Table 3. These companies are organised and registered, like group ‘A’, on a second Excel sheet and constitute group ‘B’.

4.4 Results of business evaluation criteria

From the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the individual characteristics χ_1 – χ_{32} and y_1 – y_{24} performed in Step 4, results and conclusions are drawn through the percentages, by which each variable appears in each group. The criteria, of course, vary and for this reason there is an indicative presentation of some of the most important findings.

The graphs start with Group ‘A’, which means the companies that have a website. The first graph Figure 1 shows the percentage of companies with a website, which have a corporate profile on Facebook or not. 37 out of 64 companies have a Facebook profile, while the remaining 27 do not. After calculating with the rule of three, the percentage corresponding to these numbers, we have the following graph. The same method is followed for all the other graphs.

Figure 1 Businesses with a website that also have a Facebook profile (see online version for colours)



The following diagram Figure 2 presents the percentage of companies that have the option of changing the language on their website. There is a majority of 75% that does not have such a setting and a percentage of 25% of companies that offer this option.

The next graph Figure 3 identifies the percentages of companies with a website which provide contact details. The most frequent criterion is the telephone, while the least is the e-mail. It is worth mentioning, that the percentage of companies with a telephone number provided on their website, reaches 98.4% and corresponds to 63 out of the 64 companies surveyed.

Figure 2 Percentage of businesses with alternative language in their website (see online version for colours)

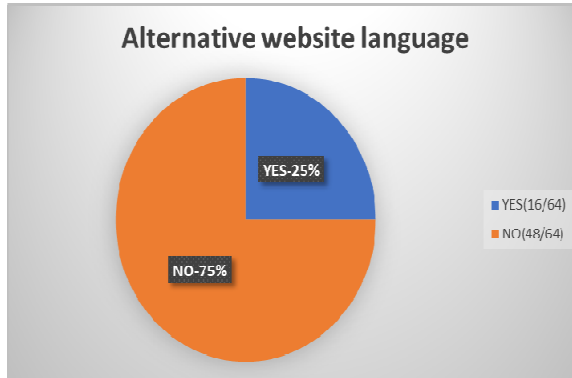
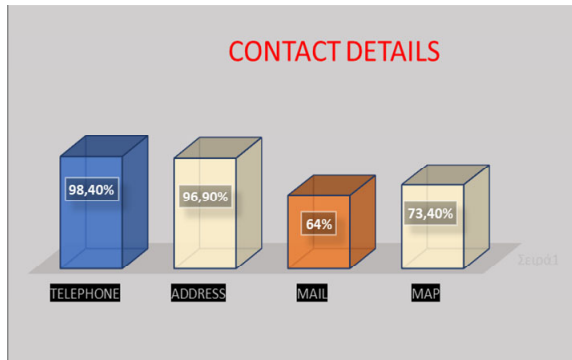
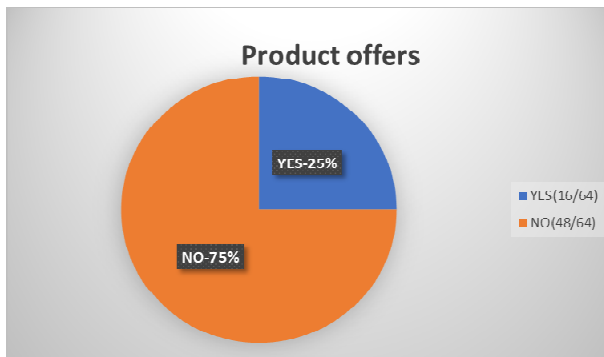


Figure 3 Percentage of companies with declared contact details (see online version for colours)



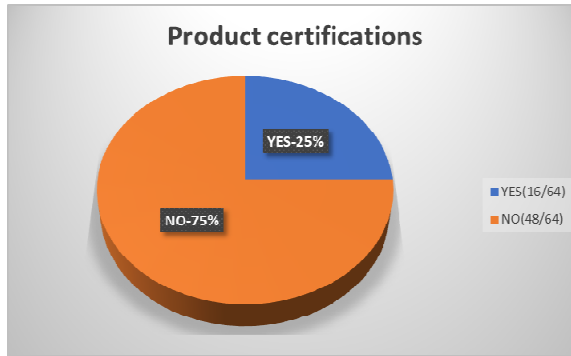
The Figure 4 shows the companies with product offers on their website. There is a 75% majority, which does not have or does not make offers online. And a percentage of 25% of the companies which has offers. These offers are presented either as a separate column on the website, or appear on each product separately.

Figure 4 Percentage of companies presenting current offers (see online version for colours)



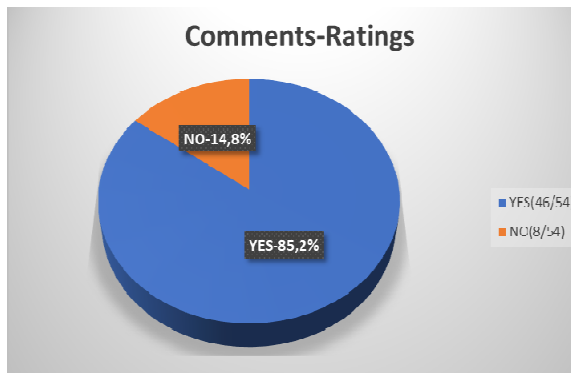
Information about product certifications was found on 25% of the websites. This percentage corresponds to only 16 out of the 64 companies, while 75% (48/64) do not have any certification for their products. The percentages are shown in detail in the Figure 5.

Figure 5 Businesses with product certifications (see online version for colours)



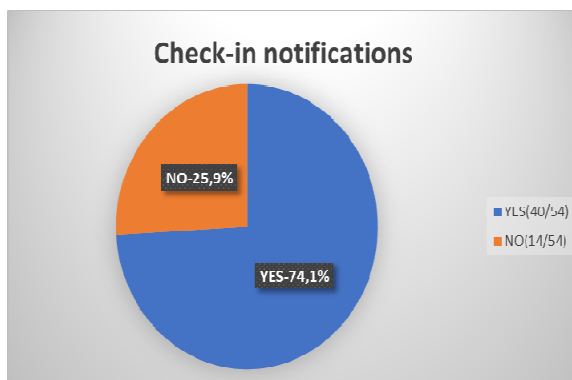
The following diagrams are related to the criteria that were studied for the corporate profiles of the companies on Facebook. The first graph reveals the percentage of businesses, which gives the opportunity to the existing and the potential clients to write or simply read comments and ratings. Since on this particular network, the ratings are quite important and influence people, it is observed that a large percentage of companies, provide such information. Only 8 out of 54 companies do not have ratings or do not show them publicly. The percentages of companies with ratings, are shown in detail in the chart below Figure 6.

Figure 6 Percentage of companies that have open comments or ratings on their profile (see online version for colours)



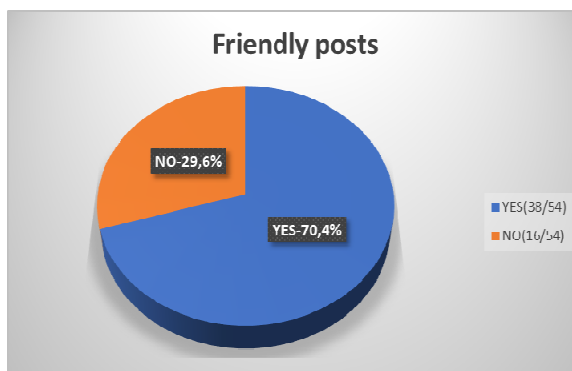
As for the criterion of check-in on Facebook, it was found that 74.1%, which means 40 out of the 54 companies, present this activity. This is very important for the page managers representing the business, as it influences the market trends and the research of the potential customers.

Figure 7 Business profiles on Facebook with presence notifications (check-in) (see online version for colours)



Another important criterion that was examined, was the posts of each company. An easy tool that any business can use to make itself more familiar to the public, and also more direct. The percentage of the companies that adopt such a tactic, is 70.4% of the cases, which means 38 out of the 54 companies. The Figure 8 shows in detail the percentages of companies in both cases.

Figure 8 Business profiles on Facebook with friendly posts (see online version for colours)

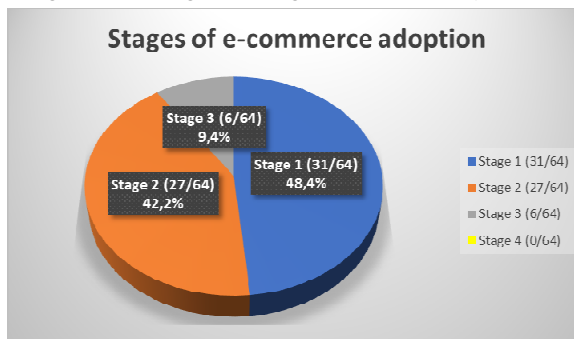


4.5 Results of the stages of e-commerce adoption

At this point, there is a graph showing the percentages of companies that belong to each stage. The diagram shows the companies that were examined based on their website.

The majority of the companies (48.4%) belong to the first stage, with mere presence. This is explained by the fact that a lot of companies can be found only with their basic contact information in web pages, such as xo.gr and vrisko.gr, without providing any other information. In addition, the absence of the 4th stage (the stage of the fulfillment of the order and of the correct distribution of the stocks), is obvious, as it is difficult to be examined and confirmed.

Due to the large percentage of businesses with mere presence, it is worth noting that 25 out of the 64 companies, do not have a website, except for a mere reference with some contact information through a search engine.

Figure 9 Business diagram according to the stage of e-commerce (see online version for colours)

4.6 Results of sum of variables

From the results of the 't' variable for companies that have a website (group 'A'), a correlation with the 'k' variable was observed. Companies that accomplished the fewest criteria, were found to be in stage 1, while those with the most criteria in Stage 3. This is largely explained by the fact that, in order to belong to Stage 1, a business should provide little and basic information. Thus, the 't' variable of websites was examined, depending on the business's stage of adoption of e-commerce.

Because of the presence of numerous criteria, it was considered easier and more comprehensible to determine the average of the criteria that are met at each stage. As a result, for stage 1 there was an average of criteria met $t_{av.} = 5$ for 31 companies. That is, 48.4% of the companies meet an average of 5 criteria. The following table clearly illustrates the categorisation. Where $t_{av.}$ is the average number of accomplished criteria.

Table 4 Business categorisation table according to the average eligibility criteria and e-commerce adoption stages

<i>Stages of e-commerce</i>	<i>Number of businesses</i>	<i>Average of criteria</i>
Stage 1	31	$t_{av.} = 5$
Stage 2	27	$t_{av.} = 17$
Stage 3	6	$t_{av.} = 21$
Stage 4	-	-

It is worth pointing out, that the least criteria that a company meets were only two, those of the telephone number and the address. Moreover, the company with the most criteria, satisfies 25 out of the 32 criteria and belongs to the 3rd stage of e-commerce. It is also observed, that most websites meet the least criteria in average. However, the second group of companies (stage 2) does not have a big difference in the number of companies, but it accomplishes more criteria.

Group B, which refers to the corporate profiles on social media, has been approached differently since e-commerce adoption stages do not apply to it. As the criteria met for each business vary, it was necessary to create classes. Initially, the number of criteria was converted into percentages. After that, through the observation and study of these percentages, 4 classes were created. The first class refers to companies with met criteria up to 25%, the second from 26%–50%, the third from 51%–75% and the fourth class, from 76%–100%. This categorisation was considered the most suitable to show more

accurately, how many criteria each company meets. Firstly, because it contains the 50% that is perceived by everyone and secondly the 4 classes seem enough to avoid large discrepancies or merging results. The findings for group 'B' are shown in the Table 5.

Table 5 Group B ranking list according to their meeting criteria

<i>Criteria classes</i>	<i>Number of businesses</i>
0%–25%	-
26%–50%	12
51%–75%	39
76%–100%	3

For Group 'B', it is worth mentioning that the least criteria met were 7, while the most criteria were 21 out of 24 in total. For the company with the 7 criteria, it is noteworthy that not even the basic contact information is mentioned, which may be explained by the fact that this company has a website as a main means of promotion. In addition, it is noticed that most corporate social media profiles, display more than half of the criteria, regardless of whether they have a website or not.

5 Summary and conclusions

Nowadays, internet is the most basic tool for advertising and promoting products and services. Green growth, which today seems more than ever, to be the only path to the sustainability of our planet, could not be missing from the world of the internet. Green products are very popular today and many companies now market them.

64 websites and 54 corporate profiles on social media, and more specifically on Facebook, were retrieved from the Greek internet, in an effort to approach the promotion of green products through the internet.

The review of the bibliography reveals many and varied ways of promoting green products, however, in practical terms, a few things are applied, at least in the domestic market. There is a constant pattern of building a website and respectively creating a profile on social media.

The initial step was to separate the companies into two groups and then each group was examined based on its own criteria and characteristics. The vast majority (over 90%) of the companies pay a lot of attention to contact details, especially those of the telephone number and the address in both groups. It is also encouraging that companies with a website, and more specifically 57.8%, have a corporate profile on Facebook and 40.6% on other social media. This fact, very likely demonstrates an early realisation, that it is more effective to advertise and promote a product or service, when it is done massively and methodically.

On the contrary, criteria such as certifications and corporate social responsibility actions, were relatively low in both groups, with percentages below 25%. This shows the indifference on the part of the companies to this kind of information, degrading in this way, the power and the impact it can have on the consumers. The same, of course, cannot be said for the customers, since we do not have information about the sales of each company. The percentage of pages advertised on websites was also low, which clearly requires money and reliable collaborations and which, with the long-term results it offers, is not a widely accepted criterion.

In general, it can be admitted that the websites and the corporate profiles on Facebook, although they both aim to promote products, deploy different criteria in order to achieve this. As far as the websites are concerned, there is more emphasis on the extensive description of the products and their properties and at the same time, a constant flood of information about the contact details of the company. This is also confirmed by the fact that the majority of the businesses, are in stage 1 of e-commerce. This conclusion is particularly important, as it shows that there is a large number of companies, which is only interested in their presence on the internet, without providing their visitors with the ability to order or search for other pages through their website.

In contrast, as for the corporate profiles on Facebook, there is an emphasis on criteria such as comments, followers and check-ins at the company. In consequence, the percentages of these criteria influence whether or not, more people will trust and prefer the particular business, in the near future. Good reviews, mass psychology and trends, play a crucial role for the public and for this reason, social media pays special attention to them.

The results of this study can therefore constitute an effective tool for website designers and developers, who support and promote e-business and promotion activities, in the wide area of green products. In addition, the study can be useful for traders and business owners. Firstly, because they can become more specific about what exactly they want from the web-developers, in order to emphasise their strengths and to further promote their work. Secondly, because in this way, business owners can build their corporate profile on social media on their own, in order to highlight the features that make them stand out.

Consequently, in order for businesses to be more popular to the public and therefore more profitable, it is imperative that they have more information provided, which will be able to attract more people. This will also help to fully inform the customers, so that they do not have questions about the product, its certifications or the reliability of the company, and to proceed with their purchase.

In addition, product proposals and offers are two very strong criteria on which companies already rely, but they must do it more intensively and methodically, so that there is a specific method behind their actions. Another particularly helpful activity, especially for websites which are less easily detected than corporate social media profiles, is the advertisements and the links to similar pages. As it can be confirmed by the existing bibliography, the SEO technique helps significantly in ensuring, that at least the business website is visited. In this way, the business appears more and more often and it has more chances to be visited by more customers and to achieve long-term business relationships with partners and consumers. Moreover, tricks such as free shipping or free samples, secure more customers, and also future purchases.

In summary, there are a number of companies that are only interested in a mere online presence. But since they all aim to sell and profit, they must be willing to play a more active role with the multiple tools, offered by the internet. It is obvious that some steps involve risk and danger. However, the future of a business is always uncertain and only the pioneers with patience, perseverance and goals, manage to prevail, to establish themselves in the market and to achieve high levels of acquisition and retention of the buying public.

Future development of the current study, could be a research that focuses on a specific company. In order to increase the profit, there will be use of the best possible way of promotion and at the same time, there will be a check of the financial statements

of the company, before and after the intensive marketing. After that, there will be an analysis and a comparison of the statements in two lists, as well as a financial and a non-financial report of the stages it passed through, but also, the obstacles it encountered.

It is, therefore, obvious, that it is difficult to do everything right and always bring satisfying results, without effort and financial cost. However, companies ensure their existence and good operation in the future, by using short-term techniques. If they use the internet properly, they can build business relationships of trust and loyalty with their customers, which will ensure their viability.

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