E-enabling the Sri Lankan Agriculture Industry

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This paper presents the design and implementation of an e-trading system for vegetables and fruits farmers in Sri Lanka to maximize the product distribution and yields gain by directly liaising with the buyers for the sale of their products at completive prices.

The system under discussion is about enabling the local farmers to use mobile and internet technologies to trade in their products in place of the conventional buyer -seller interactions. The proposed system is based on a typical commodities trading system where the farmer advertises his products and the buyer then directly negotiates with the farmer concerned and the related transactional activities which would take place from this point onwards. The paper discusses in detail how a system of this nature could be implemented in the local context, its benefits and the suitable technical infrastructure which is needed for its successful implementation.

The paper extensively discusses newer and emerging mobile internet technologies that could be effectively deployed in a developing country for benefit of the local farming community and in general the infrastructural developments which would take place as a result of successful implementation of the system described in the paper.

The e- trading system typically revolves around a client-server architecture. The web based interface is primarily targeted towards the trader. However, a Sinhala native language web interface too has been designed for the farmer, so that he would have an auxiliary interface to the system if the mobile application interface was found to be too difficult to use.

With the present e-Sri Lanka initiative and the propagation of ICT know -how in rural areas of Sri Lanka, the authors envisage a highly mature robust system could be evolved from the proposed system in order to cater to the local situation which, in turn would open up employment opportunities as well.

Key words: E-trading; Mobile internet technology; Web-enabled systems; E-Sri Lanka

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