International orientation of Chinese internet SMEs: Direct and indirect effects of foreign and indigenous social networking site use

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Abstract
We examine how international orientation (IO) of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in China is influenced by foreign and indigenous Social Networking Site (SNS) use. Existing international business theory does not explain how SNS use by emerging market SMEs underpins IO. Combining knowledge-based theory, International Entrepreneurship literature and insights from Information Management, we test a model of opposite effects for the use of foreign and indigenous SNS. Analysis of data from 117 Chinese SMEs provides strong support to the central argument that indigenous rather than foreign SNS helps this new breed of firm to become more internationally-oriented.

Keywords
International orientation, Foreign knowledge acquisition, Social networking, Internet SME, China.

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