E-Pharmacy: An e-Commerce Approach for Buying Medicine Online in Saudi Arabia

Authors : Syed Asif Hassan, Tabrej Khan, Ibrahim Manssor Al Najar, Mohammed Nasser

Abstract : The incredible accomplishment achieved by e-commerce in consumer durable area encouraged us to implement the online e-commerce model to tap the business benefits of electronic pharmacy in Saudi Arabia. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is famous for traditional herbal medicine. The rich heritage of traditional medicine has helped the mushrooming of regional pharmaceutical industries manufacturing drugs and other therapeutic against various diseases. However, the implementation of e-commerce in pharmacy has not been employed in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The electronic pharmacy (E-Pharm) is an important sector that is flourishing across the globe and providing benefits of E-Pharm to the customers and suppliers all around the world. In this context, our web-based application of electronic pharmacy is the one of its kind in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Surveys and personal interviews were used to identify key objectives of the proposed web-based portal. As per the findings of the surveys and personal interviews, following key objectives were identified: (a) The online platform will be used for ordering of prescription based medications for consumers. (b) The e-portal will provide space for pharmaceutical retailers who do not have an electronic platform to upload and sell their therapeutic products in an organized way. (c) The web portal will provide a tracking system to track the customer's behavior like choice, offer, order, shipment, payment, etc. The web-based e-pharmacy portal will be developed using MySQL and PHP. The development of e-pharmacy web portal and e-prescription practices will not only improve the growth of electronic pharmacy but would also decrease the possibility of prescription alteration thus providing safety and improving the quality of service provided to the patient or consumers.
Keywords : e-commerce, E-Pharm, MySQL, PHP