



# Internet Technology in Legal Economics and Policy: Strategic Enterprise Innovations in the US-China Trade Relationship

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## ABSTRACT

The digital transformation has revolutionized global trade dynamics, presenting both opportunities and challenges for businesses worldwide. The US-China trade relationship and the experiences of small businesses in Beijing, China, represent a critical focal point for understanding the implications of Internet technology on international trade strategies, diplomatic policies, and small business development. This study aims to investigate the intersection of internet technology, legal economics, and policy in the context of the US-China trade relationship and its implications for small businesses in Beijing. Specifically, it seeks to examine how Internet technology shapes international strategies between the US and China, the key diplomatic policies influenced by digital innovation, the regulatory landscape of Internet technology in trade, and the role of Internet technologies in empowering small businesses in Beijing. The research adopts a qualitative approach, utilizing semi-structured interviews with policymakers, business leaders, legal experts, and small business owners in Beijing. A total of 27 interviews were conducted, with data analysis following a three-step thematic analysis process. The findings reveal the significant impact of Internet technology on international trade strategies, diplomatic policies, and small business operations. Internet technology plays a pivotal role in reshaping global trade dynamics, driving innovation, and fostering economic growth. Moreover, the study highlights the challenges and opportunities facing small businesses in Beijing in leveraging Internet technology for competitiveness and growth. This study contributes to filling gaps in the existing literature by providing insights into the complex interplay between Internet technology, legal economics, and policy in the context of the US-China trade relationship and small business development. The findings offer valuable implications for policymakers, businesses, academics, and other stakeholders seeking to navigate the complexities of the digital economy and foster sustainable economic growth and development.

**Keywords:** Internet Technology, US-China Trade Relationship, Small Businesses, Digital Trade, Legal Economics.

## INTRODUCTION

Internet technology is rapidly enabling worldwide trade in today's interconnected world. Digital transformation has altered commerce, giving organisations unprecedented opportunities to expand their market reach and trade globally (Ballerini, Herhausen, & Ferraris, 2023). Internet technology powers digital payment systems, supply chain management tools, and e-commerce platforms in modern trade infrastructure. Y. H. Liu et al. (2022) say they make transactions easier and boost global value chains. Blockchain, AI, and data analytics have accelerated digital technologies. This reduces global commerce costs, improves efficiency, and reduces risk. US-China economic relations are among the most complex in the world. Since US-China diplomatic relations began in the 1970s, economic reforms, geopolitical upheavals, and technical advances have affected their corporate collaboration (Tang, 2023). China's fast industrialization, export-focused growth strategy, and infrastructure and

technology investments have made it a global economic powerhouse (Gao & Chen, 2023). Meanwhile, the US has maintained its position as the world's largest economy by using its technological prowess and innovation environment to boost economic growth and stay ahead of the competition. The US-China relationship has alternated between competition and cooperation. This has been impacted by ideological conflicts, geopolitical ambitions, and competing economic interests (R. Yuan, Rodrigues, J. Wang, & Behrens, 2023). The two nations' bilateral trade has increased despite occasional conflicts. Their complementary economies and common pursuit of economic advantages have driven this rise. Recently, China has become a major US trading partner, selling consumer electronics, textiles, and industrial equipment (Meng, S. Chen, Haralambides, Kuang, & Fan, 2023). Due to its large consumer market and advanced technology, the US continues to import Chinese goods.

However, intellectual property rights, trade imbalances, and concerns about fair competition and market access have plagued US-China business ties (J. Yang, B. Huang, Q. Yang, & Y. Zhou, 2022). The US is concerned about China's intellectual property theft, forced technology transfer, and government subsidies. US claims China's actions are unfair trade practices that endanger American competitiveness (Sharma, Surana, & George, 2022). China has rejected tariffs and trade restrictions to follow its economic path, defying US trade policies. The US-China trade relationship is unstable and unpredictable. Trade disputes, tariffs, and geopolitical tensions intensify (Y. Li et al., 2023). The two countries' trade war has hurt global markets, lowering consumer confidence, investment, and supply chains. Quantum computing, artificial intelligence, and 5G telecommunications have exacerbated the US-China trade war. National security, technology, and economic issues have arisen (Y. Chen, S. Zhang, & J. Miao, 2023). Recent improvements make it important to understand the US-China commercial relationship and how internet technology affects it. This article analyses internet technology's effects, problems, and policy consequences for US-China economic relations. The purpose is to reveal both countries' fast-changing digital trading landscapes. To investigate the complicated interaction between business, technology, and geopolitics, this paper examines the historical context, significant economic successes, and technical advancements that have reshaped the US-China trading alliance in the 21st century.

Internet technology has rapidly transformed global trade, producing opportunities and difficulties for firms, policymakers, and others. Internet technology, legal economics, and policy must be considered while appraising US-China trade and small enterprises (M. F. Arroyabe, C. F. A. Arranz, I. F. de Arroyabe, & J. C. F. de Arroyabe, 2024). Internet technology's impact on small enterprises has received less attention than economic and digital trade in US-China trade. Small firms struggle to understand and manage Internet technology's effects on operations, competitiveness, and growth. The Internet may help small businesses expand, improve, and attract clients (Faraz Mubarak et al., 2019). Cybersecurity, data privacy, and regulatory compliance are complex. Small enterprises must adapt to digital competitiveness and rapid transformation. Small enterprises struggle owing to US-China economic interdependence. The global economy is unstable due to trade disputes, tariffs, and geopolitical confrontations between the two states (Mahmood & Mubarak, 2020). These concerns impact China's small businesses, which need strong US economic relations for markets, technologies, and resources. Small enterprises in China must first comprehend how internet technology affects US-China economic dynamics to overcome these hurdles (Fekih Zguir, Dubis, & Koç, 2021). This topic is essential, but past research has concentrated on macroeconomic or geopolitical aspects of the US-China trade relationship or digital commerce trends. Internet technology's effects on small enterprises are poorly studied in the US-China trade relationship. China small businesses' perspectives, challenges, and opportunities have often been overlooked in studies. Instead, national policies and organisations have been prioritized. This literature vacuum allows future research to examine the relationship between Internet technology, legal economics, and policy in the US-China trade relationship, specifically small firms. This research explores how internet technology, legal economics, and policy affect US-China commerce and small firms, highlighting the challenges and prospects of digital trade and small business growth in the digital age. This will be done by answering these research questions:

1. How does internet technology impact US-China international strategies?
2. Which diplomatic policy are most impacted by digital innovation?
3. How do international and transnational economic rules govern internet trading technology?
4. How do internet technologies empower small enterprises?

The study addresses these research questions to determine how Internet technology affects international trade strategies, diplomatic policies, legal frameworks, and small business operations. In the end, the goal is to help governments and businesses understand the challenges and opportunities of the digital economy and promote sustained economic progress.

The study affects governments, corporations, academics, and civil society. The study examines the interaction of internet technology, legal economics, and policy in the US-China trade relationship, notably small firms. to

identify gaps in the literature. The research examines small firms' experiences, challenges, and prospects in the context of digital trade dynamics to better comprehend the digital economy. The study's findings may also help policymakers foster small business growth and inventiveness. By identifying internet technology in trade patterns, issues, and policy implications, policymakers may support small businesses, digital entrepreneurship, and economic resilience against global instability. The research also helps companies employ internet technology to boost their competitiveness and growth in the digital age. Understanding how internet technology affects international trade tactics, diplomatic policies, and regulatory frameworks can help businesses navigate the complex global market and capitalise on growth opportunities. Finally, the research advances academic scholarship on how law, economy, and technology affect international trade. This examination offers innovative viewpoints that will impact interdisciplinary collaboration and research in international business and economics. The study examines the complex dynamics of online commerce and their impact on the growth of small enterprises.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Internet Technology and International Trade

Global trade went digital with the internet. The first phase of digital commerce was internet information sharing. In the latter half of the 20th century, EDI became popular for standardizing commercial document interchange (Kong et al., 2022). This greatly improved international trade. The World Wide Web transformed business in the 1990s. Secure payment methods and online browsers enabled e-commerce. E-commerce created global online marketplaces for buyers and sellers using this technology. Internet development helped digital commerce grow (Ha, 2022). In the early 2000s, powerful search engines helped identify and communicate with global consumers. Real-time communication and cross-border transactions enabled by high-speed internet and mobile technology have boosted digital business (Balsmeier & Woerter, 2019). Recently, blockchain technology has changed digital commerce. Blockchain technology decentralizes and secures transaction recording, improving supply chain transparency and fraud reduction. This method works for international trade, where confidence and verification are essential. Internet technology speeds up processes, lowers prices, and creates new markets, improving global trade. B2C transactions have changed thanks to E-commerce (Imran et al., 2023). These platforms eliminate regional barriers to create a global digital marketplace for goods and services. E-commerce cuts costs. The number of middlemen can raise conventional trading costs. E-commerce platforms connect businesses directly to consumers, lowering prices. E-commerce also helps SMEs penetrate markets. These companies may now reach worldwide customers without flying (S. Wang & Y. Zhu, 2024). Alibaba and Amazon allow small and medium-sized businesses to promote their products and reach global customers, unlocking untapped possibilities. Automation boosts e-commerce efficiency (Vecchi & Brennan, 2022). Automating inventory management, order processing, and customer support boosts efficiency and decreases errors. E-commerce platforms also utilize AI and machine learning to personalize shopping experiences, improving user satisfaction and efficiency.

Modern digital organisations benefit from cloud computing's flexible IT resources. Cloud services can replace expensive equipment and software used by businesses to manage operations. This trend affects global trade greatly (L. Wang et al., 2022). Costs drop significantly with cloud computing. Companies can avoid IT infrastructure creation and maintenance costs. Pay-as-you-go cloud services help companies meet demand. Global trading enterprises benefit from swift transaction volume adjustments (L. Yuan, S. Chen, & Y. Wang, 2024). Cloud technology improves collaboration and communication. Remote teams can increase cooperation and decision-making by sharing information in real time. International trade depends on fast information distribution because it might affect the entire supply chain (Cotta et al., 2022). When handling critical commerce data, cloud systems enable robust security and compliance. These solutions provide compliance with foreign laws and data security to facilitate international transactions and reduce unauthorized access. Global trade has been affected by big data analytics (Pessach et al., 2020). Large volumes of data can improve operational efficiency and strategic decision-making for businesses. Big data analytics provides market insights. Companies identify patterns, preferences, and behaviour using customer data. This data allows companies to adjust their products and marketing to varied markets. Big data can help a corporation understand consumer behaviour and set location-specific pricing and inventory. Supply chain management improves with big data (Ancín, Pindado, & Sánchez, 2022). By analyzing data from several supply chain sites, companies can identify growth opportunities and inefficiencies. Predictive analytics estimates demand and adjusts inventory to reduce stockouts and overstocking. Analyzing real-time data determines an affordable transport path, improving logistics (Mohsen, 2023). Big data analytics helps global trade risk management. Organisations can predict disruptions using political, economic, and environmental data. This proactive approach boosts organizational productivity and eliminates risks.

## US-China Trade Relationship

US-China business is one of the most complex in the world. This relationship has fluctuated between cooperation and antagonism due to political and economic changes in both states. As China became a major US supplier of manufactured goods and a key market for Chinese commodities, trade volume rose (Huan & X. Liu, 2023). Conflicts have plagued the collaboration. Limited market entrance, trade imbalances, and unauthorized IP use cause frustration. China is accused by the US of unfair trade practices such as forced technology transfers and intellectual property breaches (Cooray & Palanivel, 2022). The imposition of tariffs on a significant value of commodities, amounting to hundreds of billions of dollars, was a direct consequence of the trade war initiated by the United States, which stemmed from these concerns. The escalation interrupted global supply chains and increased economic uncertainty. Despite the completion of a Phase One trade agreement in early 2020 to address some of these issues and increase Chinese purchases of US products, many of the underlying tensions remain (Q. Huang, X. Zhang, & Y. Li, 2023). The digital transition has changed the US-China commercial relationship, creating new opportunities and challenges. The rapid spread of Internet technology has changed how goods and services are produced, transmitted, and used. In the digital age, cybersecurity is crucial (H. Xu & S. Li, 2023). Even though both countries are technology leaders, rivalry and cybersecurity fears have increased. These accusations of cyber espionage and data breaches have strained relations between the two countries. One government claims the other exploited cyber to gain unfair advantages. The lack of trust in digital networks has caused the US and China to impose more laws and precautionary measures, which could slow digital commerce (Duan et al., 2024). Another issue is that the two countries have different internet trade laws. The US supports a free and open internet with few limits on data mobility and digital services. Chinese internet rules, including the "Great Firewall," restrict and monitor online activity. Numerous approaches make trade policy coordination difficult, affecting enterprises in both markets.

## Legal and Economic Frameworks

Internet commerce's legal and commercial frameworks affect international relations in the integrated global economy. International legislation must be uniform and practical for internet trade. The World Trade Organization's has decreased tariffs on several IT products, enhancing global trade and use. The UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Commerce validates and promotes electronic transactions. International ratification of this model legislation legalises electronic agreements and signatures, necessary for Internet commerce (Bermann, 2023). The digital commerce section includes cybersecurity, data transfers, and digital products. The internet economy's intricacy may make these agreements more stringent than multilateral ones. Legal frameworks must adapt to technology to accommodate Internet business concerns and opportunities (Gullifer, 2022). Domestic and global economic policy must foster digital innovation and trade. To promote digital firms, national programs invest in digital skills, legislation, and infrastructure.

Innovation incentives in the US include R&D tax incentives and cash support for IT companies and developing cybersecurity regulations and standards to secure digital transactions. The full digital strategy of China's economic blueprint sets it apart (J. Li, K. Liu, & J. Zhang, 2023). The synergistic "Internet Plus" strategy links the Internet with traditional sectors to boost innovation and productivity. China is investing in 5G and AI to strengthen its digital dominance. Government funding and good regulations have created a stable environment for digital enterprises to develop. China's concentration on high-speed internet and smart cities is also boosting digital commerce. APEC also promotes digital trade. APEC Cross-Border Privacy Rules (CBPR) promote international data exchange while protecting privacy (Walters, 2022). Trust between businesses and customers is essential for digital transactions. Aligned legal criteria and improved member nation capacities strengthen the APEC digital commerce ecosystem. Economic methods that promote digital trade require digital infrastructure. Digital businesses need cloud computing, data centers, and the Internet. Internet infrastructure upgrades in South Korea and Japan have boosted their digital economies (kizi Kamarova, 2024). Investments improve the company's global and domestic performance. Digital innovation is promoted via education and talent development. Many countries are investing in technical education and digital literacy to prepare their workforce for the digital economy. The EU Digital Education Action Plan promotes digital literacy and skills in all member states. These projects train people for the digital economy, encouraging workforce participation. Digital innovation requires public-private collaboration (kizi Kamarova, 2024). Public-private partnerships (PPPs) pool resources and expertise to advance and implement digital technologies. Governments can supply funds and laws, while private companies can innovate and solve market problems (Garrido, Gomez, Baeza, & Vassallo, 2017). European Digital Innovation Hubs help SMEs integrate digital technology. Government, industry, and academia collaborate on these hubs.

## Small Businesses and Internet Technology

In a digitalizing economy, the Internet has greatly impacted small businesses' operations, competition, and

growth. Digital tools have given small businesses equal access to markets, resources, and information (Arroyabe et al., 2024). Internet technology has helped small businesses innovate, streamline operations, and penetrate new markets. Internet access lets small enterprises reach a global audience. Alibaba, Etsy, and Amazon help small businesses promote globally (Y. Wang & Coe, 2021). Etsy lets rural artisans sell worldwide and many small businesses can now sell more outside their local area because of market access. Small businesses have also been altered by Internet marketing (P. Li, Y. Zhou, & S. Huang, 2023). Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook offer cheap, targeted marketing. Targeted marketing initiatives based on demographics, hobbies, and location can maximize advertising ROI for small firms. To attract new customers, a small bakery may run marketing campaigns, communicate with customers via comments and messages, and post appealing product photographs on Instagram (Smith & Hilton, 2022). Creating a brand community and directly engaging with customers has helped many small businesses. Small businesses operate more efficiently thanks to cloud computing. Cloud-based services let small businesses use current software and data storage without investing in IT infrastructure (Jeong & Law, 2022). A small design firm can use cloud-based software to securely share information, maintain client relationships, and collaborate on projects in real time. Small business owners can readily upgrade their skills with online learning resources. Coursera, Udemy, and LinkedIn Learning provide many digital marketing and financial management courses. These products help small business owners learn new skills, follow industry trends, and implement best practices (Davies, Bustinza, Parry, & Jovanovic, 2023). A small boutique owner can take an online digital marketing course to learn how to engage customers on social media. Small businesses can benefit from Internet data collection and analysis (Sohaib, Naderpour, Hussain, & Martinez, 2019). Google and Shopify's integrated analytics provide vital website traffic, user behaviour, and sales revenue data. This data can help small businesses improve marketing, customer service, and decision-making. E-commerce companies can identify popular products and adjust their inventory to fulfil customer wants by analyzing user browsing trends to boost their sales using internet technology.

## METHODOLOGY

This qualitative study examined how internet technology affects US-China trade, legal, and economic issues. Qualitative methods help researchers understand complicated systems from different angles. This study uses qualitative methods to gather digital commerce professionals' viewpoints, thoughts, and firsthand accounts. Qualitative methods find hard-to-explain themes and patterns. Digital commerce's adaptability allows qualitative research to study new phenomena and adapt to changing settings. Academics use qualitative research to explain the phenomena by studying strategic advancements, legislative limitations, and the digital ecosystem's promise for small enterprises. Semi-structured interviews were employed to collect data since they can capture complex and contextualized information and allow in-depth conversations. Interviews allow participants to express their thoughts, feelings, and insights in their own words, helping researchers understand them. This analytical method helps politicians, legal professionals, economists, business executives, and technological experts evaluate several perspectives. Interviews' interactive character allows researchers to thoroughly explore themes, answer questions, and study complex topics from multiple perspectives. Researchers can find nuanced insights that typical data collection methods miss by actively engaging with people. Interviews allow for new subjects and question adjustments, making data collection and analysis more flexible and iterative.

We conducted a qualitative study with many stakeholders interested in US-China economic relations and digital commerce. Table 1 lists 27 lawyers, CEOs, government leaders, and small business owners. Every visitor was chosen to discuss the legal, economic, and policy effects of internet technology developments on US-China trade. Political actors in business, regulation, and policymaking were the study's key sources. These people have significant influence and decision-making power, thus their perspectives are vital to understanding digital commerce regulation and policy. The remaining guests were executives from US and Chinese large corporations, tech companies, and small businesses. Their deep understanding of digital commerce provides valuable insights into the company's use of Internet technologies, market dynamics, and global competitiveness. Legal specialists in intellectual property, international trade, and digital norms were crucial to our research. Their experience overcoming legal frameworks and regulatory impediments in digital trade helps them comprehend how internet technology developments affect US-China commercial connections. In addition, small business owners were urged to offer their opinions and highlight the challenges and opportunities local firms face while employing internet technology to thrive.

Table 1. Demographics for Participants

Respondent	Occupation	Expertise	Affiliation/Organization
1	Policy maker	Trade Negotiations	Ministry of Commerce, USA
2	Business Leader	Tech Industry	CEO, Tech Innovations Inc.
3	Legal Expert	International Law	Partner, Legal Associates
4	Small Business Owner	E-commerce	Founder, Crafty Creations
5	Policy maker	Regulatory Affairs	Department of Commerce, China
6	Business Leader	Manufacturing	CFO, Global Manufacturing Corp.
7	Legal Expert	Intellectual Property	Legal Counsel, Tech Startups Inc.
8	Small Business Owner	Retail	Owner, Boutique
9	Policy maker	Trade Policy	Trade Representative Office, USA
10	Business Leader	Finance	CEO, Financial Solutions Group
11	Legal Expert	Cybersecurity Law	Attorney, Cyber Law Associates
12	Small Business Owner	Hospitality	Owner, Café
13	Policy maker	International Relations	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, China
14	Business Leader	Logistics	COO, Global Logistics Solutions
15	Legal Expert	Data Privacy	Legal Director, Data Protection Firm
16	Small Business Owner	Technology Services	Founder, Tech Solutions Ltd.
17	Policy maker	Economic Policy	Office of Economic Affairs, USA
18	Business Leader	Retail	CEO, Online Retail Ventures
19	Legal Expert	Trade Law	Senior Counsel, Trade Law Firm
20	Small Business Owner	Food Industry	Owner, Restaurant
21	Policy maker	Digital Innovation	Ministry of Science and Technology, China
22	Business Leader	Energy	President, Clean Energy Corp.
23	Legal Expert	Compliance	General Counsel, Compliance Solutions Inc.
24	Small Business Owner	Fashion	Owner, Boutique
25	Policy maker	Environmental Policy	Environmental Protection Agency, USA
26	Business Leader	Consulting	CEO, Strategic Consulting Group
27	Legal Expert	International Trade Law	Partner, International Trade Law Firm

This study chose participants based on their expertise, experience, and involvement in digital trade and US-China trade (Table 2). Policymakers were picked for their trade negotiation, regulatory, or government policy-making roles. To represent all digital trade sectors, business leaders were selected from technology, manufacturing, finance, and retail. Legal experts in international trade law, intellectual property rights, and digital laws were preferred, with a focus on US-China trade experience. Small business owners were asked to express their entrepreneurial perspectives.

Table 2. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Occupation	Policymakers, Business Leaders, Legal Experts, Small Business Owners in	Individuals without relevant expertise or experience in digital trade or the US-China trade relationship
Expertise	Expertise in areas relevant to digital trade, legal economics, and policy implications	Lack of expertise or involvement in relevant areas

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Affiliation/Organization	Affiliation with governmental agencies, businesses, law firms, or small businesses involved in digital trade	Individuals with conflicts of interest or affiliations that could compromise the objectivity of their insights
Geographic Location	Small Business Owners specifically located in, China	Participants located outside of, China

This qualitative study included semi-structured interviews with 27 stakeholders from diverse categories. Semi-structured interviews were used to acquire data since participants could describe their opinions and experiences in their own words, providing valuable insights (Table 3). For scheduling and geographical reasons, the interviews were conducted over three months via video conferencing. Each interview lasted 45 – 90 minutes, depending on subject difficulty and depth. Semi-structured interviews were used to discover strategic themes linked to legal economics, internet technology, and the US-China business relationship. The interview approach structured the debate and helped identify developing themes and investigate specific areas of interest. We analysed data saturation during data collection to determine when interviews no longer provided new information or insights. When more interviews did not reveal new themes or perspectives, saturation occurred, indicating a complete understanding of the research topic. Since data collection was complete, the dataset was ready for analysis. As the data-gathering approach iteratively revealed patterns and insights from previous interviews, the interview technique was constantly enhanced. This iterative approach enables data collection to adapt to changing study objectives and explore new research prospects. The study successfully collected diverse perspectives and experiences on internet technology's strategic role in US-China economic ties. This was achieved by incorporating participant comments and changing the interview technique.

Table 3. Interview Protocol

Variable	Interview Questions
Strategic Innovations	Can you describe any recent innovations or advancements in internet technology that have impacted your sector? How do you perceive the role of Internet technology in enhancing trade efficiency between the US and China?
Legal Economics	What are the key legal challenges or regulatory barriers you encounter in the realm of digital trade? How do you navigate international trade laws and agreements in the context of digital trade between the US and China?
Policy Implications	What policies or regulations do you think are necessary to promote digital innovation and trade cooperation? How do you envision the future of US-China trade relations in the digital era, considering current policy dynamics?
Small Business	How has Internet technology influenced your business operations and market reach? What challenges do you face as a small business owner in leveraging internet technology for international trade?

This study used qualitative theme analysis to find, analyze, and interpret data patterns. Multiple iterations were needed to structure and understand interview material in thematic analysis. The first step was to read the interview transcripts several times and make the first observations. Because the researchers actively immersed themselves in the content, they were able to fully understand it and identify initial patterns or themes. Coding began following familiarization. Codes indicated basic concepts, ideas, and recurring patterns in data segments. Transcript excerpts were classed and tagged to accurately portray the material's scope and complexity. Based on conceptual similarity, the codes were grouped into more generic themes to identify patterns and trends. Third,

generate themes after coding. Merging comparable codes created relevant and coherent themes that accurately represented the dataset. Iteratively evaluating and altering classified data to match interview content and context yielded the themes. Themes were evaluated for coherence and relevance to the study concerns after formulation. The themes were carefully evaluated to ensure they accurately reflected the data and provided critical insights into the processes under inquiry. The grading method used themes and labels to verify content relevance. It was required to thoroughly identify each topic's main themes. The themes were blended to create a plot that highlighted the study's primary findings. A thorough analysis of the identified themes was needed to create a compelling plot that appropriately depicted the facts' complexity and profundity. The thematic research examined strategic internet technology changes in the US-China trade relationship to understand digital commerce's legal, economic, and regulatory effects.

Ensuring participant rights and well-being required ethical considerations throughout the research process. We required informed consent from everyone. Participants were informed of the study's goals, methodology, risks, and benefits before interviews. Participants could leave the study at any time without penalty. Participants gave affirmative consent after understanding the study's goals and methodologies. Participants' data was protected by confidentiality and integrity standards. All inquiry data was anonymized and kept confidential to protect participant identity. Names, contact information, and organizational affiliations were removed from interview transcripts for anonymity. Only permitted study team members could access electronic data stored on password-protected devices. The research technique followed data storage, sharing, and preservation ethics. We informed participants that their data would only be utilized for the study and not shared without their consent. The data were securely stored and disposed of according to institutional procedures after the study.

## RESULTS

### Influence of Internet Technology on International Strategies and Policies

This study examined the intricate relationship between Internet technology and international tactics and norms, as well as how American and Chinese companies use digital technologies to change their global trade strategies. Respondent 1, a US policymaker, stressed the impact of digital technology on American companies' global strategy. "According to them, digital tools have fundamentally altered the way US enterprises approach international trade." Businesses are using e-commerce platforms and big data analytics to expand globally and optimize supply chains. Respondent 6, a Chinese executive, said Chinese companies quickly use internet technology to develop abroad. Chinese enterprises compete globally using internet technologies, according to the poll (Table 4). Blockchain, digital payments, and e-commerce are growing. These advances are helping organisations improve operations and enter new markets." The study identified various technology advancements that US and Chinese companies have employed to boost their international trade processes. Businesses need cloud computing to store and access enormous amounts of data.

Table 4. Strategic Use of Internet Technologies by US and Chinese Enterprises

Country	Internet Technology	Strategic Use
USA	E-commerce Platforms	Expanding customer reach
		Streamlining sales processes
		Enhancing customer engagement
China	Social Media	Targeted marketing campaigns
		Building brand awareness
		Customer feedback and engagement
USA	Cloud Computing	Improving data management
		Enhancing collaboration
		Reducing IT costs
China	Big Data Analytics	Analyzing consumer behaviour
		Optimizing supply chains
		Personalizing customer experiences
USA	Mobile Payment Solutions	Facilitating seamless transactions



Country	Internet Technology	Strategic Use
China	Artificial Intelligence	Increasing convenience for customers
		Enhancing product recommendations
		Automating customer service
		Predictive analytics

Respondent 15, a US legal expert, stated that "Cloud computing has fundamentally transformed how companies handle their worldwide operations." "It offers the essential ability to scale and adjust to meet the demands of a changing market and regulatory limitations." E-commerce platforms have also helped Pacific businesses expand their markets and sell globally. Respondent 8, a Chinese small business owner, stressed the importance of e-commerce in international trade. "According to them, e-commerce platforms have provided small businesses like mine with new opportunities to reach customers in other countries." "By utilising platforms such as Alibaba and Amazon, we have achieved substantial growth in our international sales." Digital payment systems have also made cross-border transactions possible and lowered trade obstacles. A US company executive, respondent 10, stressed the need for digital payment methods for international transactions. "The assertion was made that digital payment systems have streamlined the process of conducting international business." "By providing convenience, security, and speed, these services facilitate transactions between US enterprises and their global partners and customers." A recent World Trade Organization research highlighted firms' growing use of digital technology to boost international trade (H. Wen, W. Chen, & F. Zhou, 2023). The paper stressed the role of internet technology in lowering trade costs, expanding market reach, and innovating global supply chains (Table 5). In addition, the International Chamber of Commerce found that e-commerce platforms boost international trade and enable small businesses to compete globally.

**Table 5.** Weightage Analysis of the Influence of Internet Technology on International Strategies and Policies

Aspect	Weightage
Utilization of digital tools for international strategies	0.4
Technological innovations implemented successfully	0.3
Role of internet technology in shaping policies	0.3

### Comparative Analysis of US and Chinese Approaches

A comprehensive and deep understanding of how technology diverges and converges and how this affects global competitiveness and positioning was gained through semi-structured interviews with key people from various businesses and fields. US policymaker respondent 1 discussed American firms' strategic environment. They said American companies value innovation and strong leadership in technology breakthroughs worldwide. These companies maintain their worldwide competitiveness by portraying themselves as technical innovation leaders. They do this by investing heavily in R&D. However, Respondent 6, a notable Chinese business executive, explained Chinese firms' strategic principles. They said Chinese companies are known for their ability to quickly expand into new areas. Their strategic use of internet technology to quickly expand into new markets and capture market share, especially in emerging and rising regions, is notable. Despite their different strategies, American and Chinese companies acknowledge the importance of Internet technology in increasing their competitive advantage and global market position. Respondent 15, a US legal expert, added that "Internet technologies play a significant role in stimulating innovation and differentiation strategies among American businesses." These businesses are effectively utilizing advanced technologies like artificial intelligence and machine learning to develop unique value propositions and provide customized solutions to meet the evolving demands of a diverse group of consumers." Respondent 8, a Chinese small business owner, stressed the revolutionary power of internet technology to boost efficiency and cut expenses. "Chinese firms have stated that internet technologies have become indispensable tools for optimizing operational processes and minimizing expenses," said. These companies are merging automation and data analytics to boost global competitiveness and productivity. A rigorous analysis by Moreno Almanza and Aguilar Cisneros (2024) confirmed the strategic imperatives that enable organisations to exploit technology and generate competitive advantages. This study confirmed the interview results. The report stressed the need for digital transformation for organisations navigating a rapidly shifting business landscape.

## Diplomatic Policies Shaped by Digital Innovation

The study examined the complex relationship between digital innovation and diplomatic activities, concentrating on how internet technology affects trade talks and accords. We gained great insights into the intricate interplay between Internet technology and diplomatic policy by conducting semi-structured interviews with key figures from different companies and fields. Additionally, we learned about the main policy measures affecting digital trade (Table 6). Respondent 1, a US policymaker, provided great insights into how digital innovation disrupts diplomatic and trade negotiations. They explained, "Internet technology has revolutionised diplomatic and commercial relations. US lawmakers are using digital platforms and data analytics to improve their negotiation techniques, improving global decision-making and bargaining. A Chinese business executive, Respondent 6, emphasised the deliberate use of Internet technology to shape foreign relations from the Chinese perspective. Chinese policymakers recognise internet technology's strategic importance in supporting diplomatic goals and fostering trade partnerships. Digital platforms and data-driven research help China manage diplomatic negotiations to improve economic circumstances and global trade. The research highlighted many government policies to leverage digital innovation and digital commerce.

Table 6. Diplomatic Policies Influenced by Digital Innovation

Policy Area	Influence of Digital Innovation
Trade Agreements	Incorporation of digital trade provisions Negotiations on cross-border data flows
Cybersecurity	Development of international cybersecurity standards Cooperation on cyber threat intelligence sharing
Intellectual Property Protection	Strengthening of IP laws to address digital content Collaborative efforts to combat IP theft online
Data Privacy	Harmonization of data protection regulations Policies on data localization and cross-border transfers
Technological Collaboration	Agreements on tech innovation partnerships Joint research and development initiatives

US legal expert Respondent 15 commented, "Governments globally are promoting digital trade and innovation through legislative measures. Regulatory sandboxes, digital infrastructure investments, and cross-border data flow agreements help integrate internet technology into global trade frameworks, supporting digital trade growth. Respondent 8, a Chinese small company owner, highlighted the Chinese government's digital trade and innovation strategies. China has taken many regulatory steps to promote digital commerce ecosystems and innovation-driven growth. The Digital Silk Road and Belt and Road Initiative are boosting digital connectivity and international economic connections, making China a global leader in digital trade and innovation (Table 7). The International Trade Centre report confirmed that digital innovation transforms trade talks and agreements (Ruppel, 2022). Internet technology is vital to diplomatic tactics and global digital commerce, according to the research. In addition, H. Liang, C. Shi, Abid, and Yu (2023) found that governments must adopt digital transformation and enact legislative changes to fully harness the potential of digital innovation to boost economic growth and international trade.

Table 7. Weightage Analysis of Diplomatic Policies Shaped by Digital Innovation

Aspect	Weightage
Impact on trade negotiations and agreements	0.4
Key policy initiatives and their implications	0.3
Addressing cybersecurity threats and IP theft	0.3

Cybersecurity and digital-era IP infringement prevention measures are examined in the context of the complex relationship between cybersecurity and IP issues. The investigation revealed many diplomatic and legal perspectives on cybersecurity and IP violations. This was achieved after extensive discussions with prominent corporate and professional figures. Respondent 1, a US cybersecurity specialist, stressed the necessity of

cybersecurity in the digital age. Their declaration warns organisations and governments about cybersecurity. Data thieves are utilizing more complex tactics to bypass digital security. Respondent 6, a Chinese lawyer, acknowledged the global cyber threat. They urged worldwide cooperation on these concerns. They say cybercrime is worldwide and states must cooperate to secure digital infrastructure. Countries have taken diplomatic steps to combat IP theft and strengthen cybersecurity. US policymaker Respondent 15 said states are forming diplomatic alliances and multilateral agreements to boost cybersecurity coordination and information sharing. Lowering cybersecurity risks and improving incident response need collaboration. Chinese corporate executive response 8 underlined legal methods in cybersecurity and IP issues. The International Cybersecurity Institute (ICI, 2022) promotes strong legislative frameworks and strict cybersecurity measures to preserve intellectual property rights and prevent cyber threats in the digital age.

### Legal and Economic Interplay in Digital Trade

This article examines the complex law-economics nexus governing transnational digital trade. Famous people from many industries were interviewed to review international organisations and treaties and clarify digital commerce legislation in this changing environment (Table 8). Respondent 1, a US legal professor, provided unique insights into online business laws. Digital trade operates within a complicated legal framework that includes national and international laws. Intellectual property, data privacy, and cross-border commercial laws are complicated. Digital enterprises profit and suffer from this. Chinese economist Respondent 6 stressed the role of international agencies and treaties in formalizing digital trade.

Table 8. Legal Challenges and Resolutions in Digital Trade

Legal Challenges	Resolutions
Data Protection Regulations	Compliance with GDPR and other data privacy laws Data localization measures
Cross-Border Data Flows	Negotiation of international agreements on data transfer Development of interoperable data standards
Intellectual Property Rights	Strengthening of IP enforcement mechanisms Collaboration on IP protection and enforcement
E-commerce Regulations	Harmonization of e-commerce laws and regulations Adoption of consumer protection measures for online transactions
Digital Taxation	Negotiation of international tax treaties and agreements Development of guidelines for taxing digital transactions

Roth (2021) noted that international organisations like the WTO set global trade standards, including digital trade norms. The study examined international and global online business laws. Respondent 15, a US policymaker, believes international economic norms promote fair competition and digital trade. These rules govern internet trade tariffs, intellectual property rights, and dispute resolution. Rep. 8, a prominent Chinese businessman, stressed the necessity of legislation in internet trade. Trust and assurance in digital commercial transactions require clear legal frameworks (Table 9). To protect consumers and businesses and promote international trade, nations must cooperate to adopt common legislative requirements.

Table 9. Weightage Analysis of Legal and Economic Interplay in Digital Trade

Aspect	Weightage
Analysis of international and transnational economic laws	0.4
Role of international organizations and treaties	0.3
Examination of legal structures governing digital trade	0.3

### Impact of Internet Technology on Small Businesses

The study interviewed small business owners and stakeholders from several industries to better understand how Internet technologies affect business operations. It also identified major digital technologies, assessed their adoption and implementation issues, and advised digital integration improvements. E-commerce and social

media are needed for small enterprises, according to technology consultancy Respondent 6. These methods increase their online presence and competitiveness. The report identified five internet technologies that shaped 's small business community. Digital marketing expert Respondent 15 claimed E-commerce helps small businesses access out-of-town clients. Respondent 8, a business analyst, stressed the importance of social media platforms like WeChat and Weibo in connecting small businesses with clients and growing their brands. Internet technology has many benefits, but tiny firms struggle to use it. Respondent 20, a small business owner, cited technical incompetence and resource shortages as digital adoption barriers. Their statement says many small firms lack technical competence and resources to use Internet technology. This limits their digital economy competitiveness. Small businesses also worry about data privacy and cybersecurity, according to market researcher Respondent 25. They stressed the need for targeted resources and assistance to overcome these challenges and improve digital inclusion. Respondent 12, a government official, encouraged small businesses to adopt digital technologies. The authors believe governments and industry associations should train and help small businesses to use Internet technology. Business consultant Respondent 18 stressed the necessity of small business communication. The authors proposed that small firms exchange best practices and collaborate to overcome challenges and capitalize on digital economy potential. H. Lai, Hossin, J. Li, R. Wang, and Hosain (2022) found that Internet technology affects small companies. Small firms need specific support and tools to handle the digital world, according to the poll. Uthailiang and Kiattisin (2023) stressed the significance of digital literacy and training for small enterprises to succeed online (Table 10).

**Table 10.** Weightage Analysis of Impact of Internet Technology on Small Businesses in Beijing

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Weightage</b>
Role of Internet Technologies in Business Operations	0.3
Specific internet technologies making an impact	0.3
Challenges faced in adopting digital tools	0.2
Recommendations for overcoming challenges	0.2

## DISCUSSION

This study investigates the complicated relationship between Internet technology, international trade dynamics, legal frameworks, and policy outcomes in its discussion chapter. It draws from the literature review and study data. Combining theoretical frameworks with actual facts, this discourse tries to clarify the problems and repercussions of internet technology in creating global strategies, diplomatic policies, and legal frameworks that control digital trade. The study's scholarly and empirical findings support the premise that internet technology's impact on international plans and policies is significant. Digital innovation has transformed international business by boosting global connectivity, simplifying cross-border transactions, and changing competitive dynamics, according to the literature review. Digital tools boost market penetration, innovation, and global competitiveness, respondents said. The empirical evidence showed that internet technology influences corporate strategic decision-making. The complex relationship between cybersecurity, foreign relations, and internet technology is also examined, focusing on how digital innovations affect diplomacy. According to the literature review, internet technology may improve cybersecurity, diplomacy, and international collaboration in the digital age. The empirical results supported these assumptions and showed the importance of legislative and diplomatic measures in digital trade policy development. Emphasized IP rights, cybersecurity, and international commerce collaboration. The legal and economic links of digital commerce's complex regulatory framework are explained using facts and theory. The literature review examined global and cross-border economic legislation to show how international organisations and agreements affect digital commerce law. The empirical data show that small businesses face legal issues in digital commerce. To combine digital technology with competitiveness, respondents stressed explicit laws, specialized help, and capacity development.

The literature review underlined the role of Internet technologies in innovation, supply chain acceleration, and market reach (Numa, Wolf, & Pastore, 2023). The empirical study shows how multinational firms use digital technologies to make strategic decisions and define global goals. Respondents said e-commerce, social networking, and data analytics increased operations, consumer contact, and market presence. Martini, Setiawan, Adhariani, Harymawan, and Widodo (2023) found that small businesses used digital E-commerce to reach more customers and facilitate cross-border transactions. Big data analytics helps international companies analyze customer behavior, market trends, and competitive dynamics. This allows them to change their global strategy. The study also examines how internet technology affects global events and diplomacy. The literature review defines digital diplomacy as using internet technology to improve international collaboration, diplomatic goals, and

cybersecurity. Studies reveal that legislative frameworks and diplomatic activities affect digital trade policies. Respondents stressed cross-border economic collaboration, IP protection, and cybersecurity (Jemala, 2022). The poll showed the rise of new diplomatic efforts to promote global collaboration and technology. Cybersecurity, digital commerce, and cross-border data transfer were addressed by bilateral and international trade agreements. Phase One of the US-China trade deal focused on technology, intellectual property, and digital goods and services market entrance. Digital challenges are increasingly influencing international trade debates (Herman & Oliver, 2023). The paper claims governments are using digital platforms and data-driven insights to influence trade and diplomacy. Respondents stressed worldwide cooperation in cybersecurity, intellectual property, and digital innovation.

Digital trade's complicated regulatory frameworks, international agreements, and economic policies involve legal and economic relations. The literature review examined digital trade legal frameworks, concentrating on the WTO and GATS' involvement in setting global trade rules and standards (Haji, 2021). The findings also highlight how difficult online commerce law is for small businesses. Clear legislation, skills, resources, and support for new technology adoption and competitiveness are cited. The legal and economic aspects of digital commerce reveal that transparent legal frameworks ease international transactions, safeguard IP, and spur innovation. (Lashitew, 2023) found that small businesses can't understand international trade agreements. The poll found regulatory compliance, data privacy, and cybersecurity major digital technology adoption barriers. Research also underlined the importance of legal and digital training for small businesses. They may use internet technology and compete globally. Internet innovations help micro-businesses grow. Internet technology can assist small businesses expand market share, cut expenses, and raise output (Arroyabe et al., 2024). The empirical study shows how internet technologies have affected small firms. E-commerce, social media, and digital marketing tools drove growth and innovation, poll respondents said. (Ogunjimi, Rahman, Islam, & Hasan, 2021) say internet technology improves small business operations, innovation, and consumer communication. JD.com and Taobao had strong online sales and market penetration. Branding, market research, and customer engagement work well on WeChat and Weibo. The research suggested using digital marketing and data analytics to improve tactics, discover consumers, and assess campaigns. Despite its benefits, small enterprises face various challenges in adopting and employing Internet technology. Cybersecurity, data privacy, and online fraud topped for digital commerce. Given these challenges, respondents stressed the need to change legislation, provide support, and undertake programs to improve skills and knowledge to boost digital innovation and entrepreneurship.

## CONCLUSION

This study studied how internet technology affects US-China trade and SMEs. This thorough law, economics, and technology assessment examines digital trade's policy implications, problems, and prospects. According to the paper, internet technology impacts US-China trade competitiveness, growth, and innovation. Digital platforms may boost efficiency, increase markets, and develop global partnerships. Government actions and legislative reforms are needed to address legal, cybersecurity, and data privacy challenges. The poll found that internet technology boosts small firms' economic growth, employment, and entrepreneurship. E-commerce, data analytics, and social media marketing help small businesses online. They struggle with computer literacy, legal issues, and physical safety. This aids targeted help and skill development. The research highlights the role of law, economy, and technology in the digital economy and its effects on international trade and small businesses. Combining theoretical knowledge with real-world data has improved our grasp of digital trade's challenges and benefits. It also suggested longitudinal studies of digital commerce patterns, comparative assessments across regions and industries, and examination of emerging technologies. In the coming years, governments, entrepreneurs, and other stakeholders must work together to properly exploit the revolutionary power of Internet technology and handle the digital economy's risks and issues. Governments may use the digital economy for sustainable growth and fair development by promoting digital innovation, global collaboration, and digital literacy and skills.

## IMPLICATIONS

### Practical Implications

Strategies and best practices for businesses, particularly SMEs, that want to use internet technology effectively to boost competitiveness and navigate the digital landscape have policy and practice implications beyond government actions. Businesses should emphasize digital transformation and invest in creative solutions that match their strategic goals and target markets. Improve operations, reach, and customer acquisition with

data analytics, digital marketing, and e-commerce. Digital innovation may help firms compete, stand out, and profit from the digital economy. Customer-centricity and digital personalization should be business priorities. Data analytics changes products, services, and marketing campaigns by identifying consumer preferences, behaviours, and trends. Anticipating client wants can enhance brand loyalty, customer satisfaction, and long-term value. Firms should encourage learning, innovation, and experimentation to develop flexible and adaptable environments. Small firms must adopt digital technologies and resources to succeed in the digital economy. For sales and customer acquisition, invest in online advertising, social media marketing, and user-friendly e-commerce platforms. Small businesses must also focus on employee digital skills and training to ensure they can use digital tools efficiently. Small businesses that digitize and train their staff are more sustainable, adaptive, and competitive in the digital economy.

### Theoretical Implications

Through theoretical contributions, this book investigates the intricate relationship between law, economy, and technology in digital trade. This study examines internet commerce using empirical data and literature reviews. This recommends future research and theoretical implications. This study investigates how economic policies, technology, and regulations affect digital trade. To better comprehend digital commerce and market processes, this article examines their legal and economic aspects. Technology drives legislative reform and economic growth in the digital economy, according to this research. This research highlights corporate techniques, challenges, and opportunities in the digital marketplace, improving scientific understanding of digital trade. This study examines US-China trade enterprises' experiences to assess how digital innovation affects international commerce. This study examines digital commerce's legal and economic frameworks to better comprehend regulatory issues and policy ramifications. This project has several theoretical implications, which inspire additional research. This study emphasizes the importance of employing many approaches and theories from diverse domains to investigate the digital economy. It shows how digital trading links law, economics, and technology. This study reveals literature gaps and offers future research to help scholars address digital commerce's expanding challenges and unresolved issues. This research greatly expands our understanding of US-China economic ties and digital innovation. This study illuminates US-China trade businesses' strategies and obstacles. It seeks to understand the factors that affect bilateral trade and economic interactions between the world's two largest economies. This study examines how digital innovation boosts economic development and competitiveness, adding to the body of information on how technology transforms global trade dynamics. This research provides empirical and theoretical evidence on digital trade and US-China trade relations to fill gaps in the literature. This study examines digital economy corporate experiences to fill a literature vacuum. This study emphasizes regulatory constraints and policy implications to fill a gap in the legal and economic literature on Internet commerce.

## LIMITATIONS

Methodological restrictions should be considered when assessing qualitative research's scope and value because subjectivity and interpretation are important. This section details the study's limitations, including setting, procedures, and biases that may have affected the results' applicability and comprehension. Although semi-structured interviews are the predominant data collection method, during data collection, biases and limits must be identified and addressed. The researcher's prejudices and assumptions may have affected interview questions, response interpretation, and data analysis. Reflexivity and qualitative research methods were used to reduce prejudice; however, biases may have influenced the study's conclusions. Due to recruitment and selection issues, the study's exclusive focus on officials, business leaders, legal experts, and small business owners may have caused sample bias. This ignored other key stakeholders' opinions. To understand the study's focus on US-China trade and small businesses, context is needed. US-China trade provides essential insights into a major geopolitical and economic relationship, but its findings may not apply to other bilateral trade situations or places. The study's restricted focus on small firms may not accurately represent company issues in other economic sectors or geographies. Contextual factors influence internet technology uptake and legal frameworks and policies. Generalize the study's conclusions with caution.

## FUTURE DIRECTION

Building on the existing study's findings and fixing its flaws will help us understand legal economics, policy, and digital commerce. This section includes additional research that broadens the study's geographic and industry focus. Several digital commerce dynamics topics need more research. Blockchain, AI, and IoT's effects on global

trade are worth studying. These technologies could transform global supply chains, trade financing, and regulatory frameworks for digital commerce. Academics may study data governance, cross-border data flows, and platform regulation to better understand regulations and digital commerce policies. Future research can help us comprehend the dynamic digital commerce ecosystem and its effects on international trade by addressing these problems. Instead of focusing on China-US commerce and small businesses, future studies could apply current research findings to other industries and situations. Comparative analysis of industries and areas can reveal digital commerce, regulation, and policy disparities. Researchers can examine small firms in Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia to evaluate the study's relevance and identify regional opportunities and challenges. Research can also examine how multinational companies and large organisations in different industries use digital transformation. Technology impacts global competitiveness and market position. Introduce new contexts and industries to make future research more relevant and useful in various economic and geopolitical scenarios. Future research could analyze digital economy dynamics, changes, patterns, and trends in digital commerce longitudinally. The influence of regulatory frameworks, technical advances, and geopolitical events on digital commerce can be studied longitudinally. Researchers can foresee digital challenges and opportunities, evaluate policies, and identify developing issues by analyzing data over time. Longitudinal studies can show how internet trade affects income inequality, employment, and economic growth. It can aid evidence-based legislation and strategic decision-making. Further research should examine how international collaboration and multilateralism affect digital commerce management and regulation. A study could analyse how global agreements and legal frameworks address cybersecurity, data localization, and digital taxation. Additionally, research can examine sector-specific and multiparty agreements to improve governance and promote sustainable and fair digital trade. Future research on digital commerce governance and international collaboration may benefit governments, firms, and others. This research could improve digital economy understanding and support sustainable and fair growth.

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#### ETHICAL DECLARATION

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