

GUEST EDITORIAL PREFACE

Special Issue of Selected Papers from CENTERIS 2012

João Varajão, University of Minho, Minho, Portugal

Maria Manuela Cruz-Cunha, Polytechnic Institute of Cávado and Ave, Vila Frescainha S. Martinho, Portugal

INTRODUCTION

This issue of the Information Resources Management Journal integrates adapted and enhanced versions of five papers selected among the 110 papers presented at the International Conference *CENTERIS'2012 – Conference on ENTERprise Information Systems: aligning technology, organizations and people*, held in Vilamoura, Algarve, Portugal, on October 2012. *CENTERIS'2012* gathered academics, researchers, IT/IS professionals, managers and solution providers from 30 different countries representing the five continents, to share experiences, bring new ideas, debate issues and introduce the latest developments in Enterprise Information Systems.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

This special issue includes five contributions to the discussion of the main issues, challenges, opportunities and developments related with EIS as tools for competitiveness. Written by thir-

teen internationally renowned and experienced researchers in the EIS field, these contributions represent five countries from three continents (Europe, Africa and Asia), contributing to a cross-cultural dimension.

In the first paper, “*Business Alignment Methodology: The Discovery Phase*”, Zacarias and Martins focused their attention on the business discovery phase of Business Alignment Methodology (BAM) with a case study in a real organizational setting. Current business process modeling methodologies offer little guidance regarding how to discover and maintain business process models aligned with their actual execution. This paper describes how to achieve this goal by uncovering, supervising and improving business process models based on actual work practices, using the Business Alignment Methodology. BAM aims at enabling business process modeling, supervision and improvement through the distinction of two dimensions: (1) business processes; and (2) work practices. BAM encompasses three phases: (1) Business Process Discovery; (2)

Business Process Supervision; and (3) Business Process Assessment and Improvement.

The importance of information in the world and the so-called information society places information systems in the center of organizations sustainability. Organizations and economic agents are pieces from a dynamic “puzzle” that adjust itself according to the requirements of consumers and users of information and communication technologies, promoting new developments in markets and society. These challenges display the relevance of all who assume the responsibility for management of information and technologies systems which can affect the normal functioning of markets and economic organizations. Sustainability questions focus themselves on the articulation from several economic agents, on the management of information and technological resources and on the efficiency of markets, aiming to grant a peaceful and consolidated continuity of society. Beyond several factors which can be considered relevant to achieve organizational sustainability in the frame of information and knowledge society, there are some nuclear pillars in which managers and organizations need to develop competences. In their theoretical approach supported in a focus group research, titled “*Some Information Systems Requirements in view of Organizational Sustainability in an Information Society*”, the authors Esteves, Anunciação and Santos propose and evaluate a group of key elements to be measured for a proper evaluation of organizations sustainability in the context of information society, taking in view future empirical studies and the application of the concept in management tasks.

Vai, Lee and Negreiros analyze and discuss the problems and challenges occurred in the implementation of a centralized ERP system in entertainment properties in “*Implementation of Enterprise Resource Planning for the Supply Chain Management of the Food & Beverage Department at Macao Entertainment Corp*”. One of the six gaming concession holders in Macao, Macao Entertainment Corp (MEC), undertook to centralize three casino/entertainment properties through utilization

of a centralized Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) in April 2010. The Supply Chain (SC) department was the first to apply the ERP in this centralization process. After rolling-out the new ERP system, a number of problems arose due to the organizational changes required. To identify the problems, information was collected through questionnaires and interviews in order to determine the level of agreement by staff regarding the existence of issues typical to such organizational change. In the paper the authors determine what problems and challenges occurred in this initial implementation to assist in developing recommendations to mitigate those effects in subsequent rollouts.

Business Process Reengineering (BPR) is one of the existing methods in the literature that lead to evolutionary changes and adjustments that have become a necessity in today’s business. In their contribution, “*Comparison of Business Process Models as Part of BPR Projects*”, Tka and Ghannouchi compare process models to reference models to detect differences and propose improvements thereafter to remedy them. Their paper presents a state of the art on works that were interested in comparing models of business process models and defines an approach for comparing two business processes and measuring the gap between them. The proposed approach has been developed and was tested with software development processes.

The research undertaken by Ribeiro, Rijo and Leal aims to create a new approach for spider maps production that results in a fast and automatic method having as input only network location data. Schematization task is commonly done by hand or by purely graphics software, which is a difficult and time consuming task that also needs a skilled map designer, which results in an expensive outcome. A configurable force-directed algorithm allows fast creation of eye-pleasing schematic maps, avoiding labor-intensive manual arrangement. In the other hand, different sets of design rules and constraints may be used to quickly generate alternatives, and allow the configuration of a distinctive graphic style. Their paper “*A new approach for schematics for public transport*

spider maps” presents some of the rules and constraints that may be used to output a map that meets certain criteria in order to be used as a spider map in transportation systems. The authors present results with real public transport network datasets, and discuss possible evaluation criteria, introducing a new set of experimental validations that confirm the previous research but also leading to new open issues for future work.

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João Varajão
Maria Manuela Cruz-Cunha
Guest Editors
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