

**GUEST EDITORIAL PREFACE**

# **Special Issue from the 2010 Conference on ENTERprise Information Systems: Aligning Technology, Organizations and People (CENTERIS 2010)**

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This special issue of the *Information Resources Management Journal* integrates the enhanced versions of a selection of papers submitted and presented at the international conference, CENTERIS 2010 – Conference on ENTERprise Information Systems: Aligning Technology, Organizations and People, held in Ofir, Portugal, October 2010. It was the second edition of a conference where, under the *leitmotiv* of Enterprise Information Systems, academics, scientists, IT/IS professionals, managers and solution providers from all over the world will had the opportunity to share experiences, bring new ideas, debate issues and introduce the latest developments.

## **INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

This special issue includes six contributions to the discussion of the main issues, challenges, opportunities and developments related with EIS as a tool for competitiveness, written by

eleven authors, that includes internationally renowned and experienced researchers in the EIS field.

In the first paper, “Towards Effective Tourism Dynamic Packages,” Ferreira et al. introduce the Open Tourism Initiative (OTI) as a framework to support tourism activities, following the Tourism Virtual Enterprise (TVE) organizational model and pragmatics-based collaboration decisions. To assure the better alignment among tourism services providers and client’s expectations, the framework (and its architecture) must support reliable interoperability and dynamic networking reconfiguration as well as the (co-) creation of the tourist’s activity regardless of information systems and using real-time collaboration mechanisms. OTI enhances dynamic tourism packages management under the requirements of reconfigurable environments and human direct participation. This article proposes a logical model for TVE organizations as well as an UML formalization for its supporting architecture.

In “Potential Use of the Theory of Vulnerability in Information Systems,” Silva et al. discuss the use of the theory of vulnerability in Information Systems simulation. History already shows us that in some Information Systems one simple failure lead to disproportioned economic and social damages. Initially used in structural systems, the theory of vulnerability searches for this type of failures. By mimic systems and representation through models, simulation allows performing studies on an imitated system without disrupting the real system itself. Simulation provides a safer approach to explore and test the system in damage scenarios without real consequences.

The relationship between Information Technology and Business has been growing over the years, materialized through increasing investment on IT. This is typically considered a burden so companies have been seeking alternative supplying approaches such as Outsourcing, Managed Services or Cloud Computing. In the third paper, “Framework Based on Benefits Management and Enterprise Architecture,” Rodrigues and O’Neill focus on how investment is made, to stress the balance that has to be reached between the expectations of the business versus the capabilities and cost of IT. A framework for assessing investments in IT that seeks to highlight the advantages of merging IT Benefits Management with an Enterprise Architecture is presented.

The Portuguese Air Force has made an effort to remain at the forefront of organizations, looking to problems such as the inadequacy of Information Systems and the treatment of business as rigid hierarchical structures. The process of change initiated in 2009, which is transversal to the Organization, recommends a set of actions including the definition of business processes in order to determine the organizational “AS IS” important to the establishment of “TO BE”. Simultaneously, the Air Force is studying the concepts related to enterprise architecture whilst trying to deepen the relationship between Mission, Vision, Goals, Objectives, Strategy, Tactics, Policy, Business Rules and Process Architecture. In

this context, considering the need to create and identify a way to validate the consistency between Enterprise Architecture and Process Architecture, Páscoa et al. propose the creation of a value matrix, representing objectives and processes associated with a set of rules for its creation and update, in their paper “Business Objectives and Business Processes: Alignment and Verification.”

The international stability is viewed as corollary of the sustainable growth. This has only technology-driven solution, at ‘global village’ extension, with required appropriateness and shared acceptance. The survey, on such guess, looks at the ‘robot age’ potential, as supplementary aid in the balanced world deployment that adds to the socio-economic and politico-legal frames. The analysis moves from the globalisation issues, at the known (economic) global and (ecologic) no-global pictures, to outline the traits of the post-global robot age, consistent with the sustainable growth, hopefully, with international stability, grounded on ‘the force of the law’. The stability based on ‘the law of the force’ is past option, even allowing steady truces. According to the authors of “The Mankind Growth Consistency: Outlook on Political Sceneries,” Michelini and Razzoli, the globalisation makes the choice unfit, having doubtful economic and social sustainability and not achieving the ecologic sustainability on the consistent long term horizons.

Creating and negotiating an inter-organizational business case (BC) for multiple-stakeholder enterprise systems is a major challenge. In “Exploring the Business Case Development Process in Inter-Organizational Enterprise System Implementations,” Eckartz et al. look closer into the factors that influence the stakeholders’ willingness to share information necessary for the BC development. We develop an explanatory framework showing the effect that project constellation has on the development of a shared BC. The authors identify several factors, such as goal consensus, cultural and semantic similarities and willingness to share information, that mitigate this

effect. Subsequently they apply the framework in an inter-organizational case study in which a BC is developed. The findings show that current BC development methods need to be re-stated and complemented by new tools and interventions to support stakeholders in the inter-organizational specific setting. Authors elaborate on the possibilities that group decision support systems might offer to overcome challenges that might be experienced in the BC development process.

IRMJ, and for the excellent support of their team of professionals. We would like to thank all the members of the Scientific Committee of CENTERIS 2010, for their commitment and for sharing their knowledge and experience in the support of the decision-making processes. Finally, we would like to show our appreciation and gratitude to all the authors for their excellent contributions: this special issue traduces the result of their relevant work and deep knowledge on the Enterprise Information Systems domain.

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