

Introduction to OS Mini-Track for the Enterprise Ecosystem: Extending and Integrating Technology Serving the Enterprise

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Abstract

This paper introduces the mini-track on the Enterprise Ecosystem within the track of Organizational Systems and Technology at the HICSS 2021 conference. This mini-track reflects the expanding depth and breadth of enterprise systems integration as it incorporates new policies and approaches to governance, new technologies and changing business influences. This track seeks to bridge between the theoretical and actual business practices by involving both academia and industry practitioners. A brief overview is provided for each paper included in this HICSS 2021 mini-track. This year's papers address plural sourcing strategy with a focus on service governance models used by international firms and the role of ICTs as sociotechnical actors which can hamper enterprise systems implementations.

1. Enterprise Ecosystem Track Overview

Emphasis of this track spans the integration of internal and external corporate integrated enterprise systems, here-after referred to as the Enterprise Ecosystem. This mini-track scope reflects the increasing depth and breadth of enterprise integration. Over the last 22 years, this mini-track has been a forum to explore and disseminate insights about the leading influences on extended and integrated enterprise systems. The enterprise ecosystem relies extensively on close technology and operational partnerships, service organizations, and enabling technologies such as cloud computing, Internet of Things, blockchain and others. All leading to a host of interdependencies with other organizations and entities.

The Enterprise Ecosystem has the integrated enterprise system such as advanced forms of Enterprise Resource Planning systems as its foundation. Such corporate systems continuously evolve and expand to serve the changing needs of corporate strategy and the changing business environment. Expanding the enterprise ecosystem is

required when adopting emerging technologies and responding to changing business requirements. Management of the enterprise system is being expanded, altered and complicated by digital transformation and continual addition of new innovations. Many firms are migrating to cloud computing or absorbing emergent technologies such as supply chain automation, IoT and Blockchain. For sustainability of the organization, there is a need to leverage 'Big Data'. As data achieves higher volume, velocity, and variety, firms seek value by harvesting insights from advanced data analytics. To fully leverage an innovation, it must be integrated into business processes and the operational systems supporting the Enterprise within its broader Ecosystem.

The challenge to integrate technological innovations and adapt business processes within organizational systems continues. Primary enterprise systems are continually expanded and enhanced with technology innovations. In addition, organizations are continually investing time to link their enterprise systems with service organizations and supply-chain partner systems in efforts to optimize, improve reliability and/or automate. Such inter-organizational systems typify a newer challenge of process integration across corporate and international boundaries.

2. Plural Sourcing: Modes of Service Governance

The year's track includes a paper addressing governance issues across the enterprise ecosystem. It is titled "Implementing Global Business Services in a Plural Sourcing Context: Conceptualizing Modes of Service Governance", by authors Albert Plugge and Shahrokh Nikou. This empirical study investigates the need for service governance to manage interdependencies among service vendors, covering mixes including both in-house and outsourced

services. The primary research question is stated as “What type of service governance modes are used by firms to implement global business services when applying a plural sourcing strategy? “ Herein, the term plural sourcing is defined as “the degree of simultaneous insourcing and outsourcing (make-and-buy) the same business service activities by a firm but differ from each other in their particular capabilities and limitations”.

This study uses Grounded Theory methodology and utilizes semi-structured surveys targeting respondents among executive management of a diverse set of international companies in ten industries. Five distinct service governance models emerged. Models suggested for services governance within international firms include: 1) decentralized, 2) centralized, 3) regional, 4) global and 5) multifunctional. This paper fills a research gap in looking specifically at plural sourcing for services, and points the way for advancing understanding of complex service governance approaches within international companies across diverse industries.

3. ICTs as an Actor Exerting Project Control

This paper addresses how technology can exert project control during implementation of an enterprise system. Entitled “ICTs as Challenges to Enacting IS Project Control: An Interpretive Case Study of an ERP Implementation” the paper applies the research lens of sociologist John Law’s Actor-Network view of control perspective. Authors Sutirtha Chatterjee and Henry Fulk investigate the research question of “How can ICTs shape enactment of IS project control, especially in unexpected ways?”. Expanding on the traditional view of humans as controllers and controlees, this study includes ICT’s in active roles as controllers and controlees. Sociologist Law explains control as being exercised “by, through, and over interactions amongst actors forming parts of actor-networks”. The emphasis is on how Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) exert control over time, especially when control emerges as unexpected or in an undesirable way.

This interpretive analysis follows the Cole and Avison 2007 hermeneutical framework as informed by Law’s Actor-Network control perspective. From this sociotechnical perspective, the authors offer a set of four key insights regarding how ICT’s challenge project control and therefore can hamper the project’s progress. Examples of insights include that ICTs may hide aspects of project status from other actors, that

data stored or process within the ICT may not be revealed to other actors, and that lack of full features may require negotiation or compromising. These insights offer perspectives for ICTs as actors in a inter-dependent network where each ICT’s role impacts the whole, often in unexpected, unknown or even undesirable ways.

4. Enterprise Ecosystem Mini-Track Connects with Industry and Journal

In this mini-track’s 22nd year, this track continues actively seeking the involvement and interaction of academia and industry practitioners. With that in mind, this year we welcome a new co-chair from industry, Dr. Sathya Narasimhan, Sr. Director, New Ventures and Technologies at SAP, Inc. This continues our track’s history of connecting with the enterprise systems industry and corporate practitioners. This new co-chair also renews the track’s on-going connection with a leading international provider of integrated enterprise systems, SAP, Inc.

This mini-track has a “Fast Track” journal relationship with the International Journal of Accounting Information Systems (IJ AIS) for selected articles that contribute to the accounting information systems discipline.

5. Enterprise Ecosystem

We acknowledge our thanks to all submitting authors, reviewers and other contributors. Based on all their involvement and contributions, this enterprise ecosystem mini-track continues to present insightful and practical research to better understand the dynamics, barriers and catalysts for the extended enterprise.