Editorial

Khalil Khoumbati*

Institute of Information Technology
University of Sindh
Jamshoro, Sindh, Pakistan
E-mail: khalil.khoumbati@googlemail.com
*Corresponding author

Zahir Irani

Brunel Business School
Brunel University West London
Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB8 3PH, London
Fax: +44–1895–269729
E-mail: zahir.irani@brunel.ac.uk

Biographical notes: Dr. Khalil Khoumbati is an Assistant Professor at the Institute of Information Technology, University of Sindh, Jamshoro, Pakistan. He received his PhD on 'Evaluating enterprise application integration adoption in healthcare organisations' from Brunel University, UK. He is on the editorial board of several international journals, such as *Transforming Government: People, Process and Policy*. He has published several research papers in internationally refereed journals, such as the *Journal of Management Information Systems* and *Journal of Computer and Information Systems*. He has presented several papers in international conferences, such as *HICSS*, *AMCIS*, *ECIS* and *EMCIS*.

Professor Zahir Irani is the Head of the Business School at Brunel University, UK. He has been recognised as the Hooker Distinguished Professor at McMaster University (Canada) and is a Visiting Professor at several universities. He is the Editor-in-Chief of the established *Journal of Enterprise Information Management* and *Transforming Government: People, Process and Policy*. He has coauthored teaching textbooks and written almost 200 internationally refereed papers. He publishes his scholarly work in leading journals, which include *IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management*, *Information and Management, Information Systems Journal*, *Journal of Management Information Systems* and *European Journal of Information Systems*.

In this special issue of *International Journal of Value Chain Management*, we are delighted to present nine papers that discuss a range of topics. The papers in this issue are expected to significantly provide a better understanding of how systems can be organised effectively to provide process information and information products within an organisational setting.

Claver-Cortés *et al.*, in their paper, 'E-government maturity at Spanish local levels', examine the strategies adopted by the Spanish municipalities. They describe that Spanish municipalities do, in fact, have enough resources and knowledge to successfully design and implement e-government strategies. The weaknesses tend to reside on the political and organisational aspects, because those who distribute these resources do not always favour a more strategic management. It seems that these councils tread a fine line between the need for developing e-strategies and the desire for investing in other areas towards the improvement of the council. Therefore, the impression obtained from this research is that the use of e-government practices to improve performance and modernise local administrations is a positive, yet slow, strategy.

Yusop *et al.* have attempted to present 'The impacts of non-functional requirements in web system projects'. In this paper it is argued that it is a complex task to develop web systems when the Functional Requirements (FRs) and Non-Functional Requirements (NFRs) are not well understood. This is made more difficult when new requirements are continually discovered and implemented. The results from this qualitative research highlight that web developers typically do not pay sufficient attention to NFRs. This is often due to uncertainty, lack of time, lack of knowledge on the importance of NFRs, and to the fact that NFRs are not readily available and documented from previous projects for the purpose of reuse. The data further showed that web developers do not elicit NFRs at the same time and at the same level as FRs. Hence, there needs to be a systematic and structured way of documenting the NFRs.

Gutierrez and Serrano work together on 'Assessing strategic, tactical and operational alignment factors for SMEs: alignment across the organisation's value chain'. This paper proposes an alternative instrument that aims at the understanding of IT alignment at all three levels: strategic, tactical and operational. The results demonstrate the feasibility of using the proposed instrument when determining the level of maturity. The instrument proved to be useful to share, among all the participants at all levels, the basic knowledge that is needed to achieve alignment, recognising the mature factors that contribute to the organisation's alignment and also to highlight other less matured factors that need to be improved to leverage the alignment maturity.

Ali *et al.*, in their paper 'A structurational analysis of CRM systems cultural aspects: a comparative case study', propose structuration theory as another perspective to study culture issues in the Information Systems (IS) discipline. The preliminary structurational analysis of the comparative case study shows that there are cultural dimensions which play a role in each society and CRM implementation and operation in multinational environments. The authors have used the qualitative research data analysis, mainly soft systems methodology, to code their data and develop the different themes of each case study, which lead to their preliminary framework of cultural dimensions that may have influence on the CRM implementation and operation in multinational environments.

Shaikh *et al.* in their paper attempt to investigate Computer Integrated Manufacturing (CIM) in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Pakistan. Their research indicates that the government of Pakistan should provide all the essential benefits and facilities in all areas, such as technological aspects, manpower, infrastructure, tax rebate, and finance, to create a favourable environment. Thus, the SMEs could get rid of multidimensional pressures. The organisations should immediately adopt the computer integrated manufacturing-oriented systems with all their parameters to enhance their productivity in the broad sense.

Assar and Boughzala in their paper 'Empirical evaluation of public e-procurement platforms in France' have briefly described the functional and legal requirements for public e-procurement in France, and present a general evaluation of eight deployed e-procurement platforms using an empirical methodology.

Boulmalf *et al.* in their paper have conducted a campaign of tests to characterise the performance of the IEEE 802.11g in a typical Cubical office environment. Results show that the performance of IEEE 802.11g can be greatly degraded owing to co-channel interferences especially for TCP traffic.

Leclercq in his paper 'Key success factors of mobile technology implementation within firms' presents the consequences of mobile technologies in organisations. This research highlights the different factors that favour the appropriation of mobile technologies by individuals.

El-Haddadeh and Ghoneim in their paper have expanded the relationship between indirect costs management and enhanced productivity, hence establishing a relationship between indirect costs and productivity. Thus indirect costs have been shown as enablers of successful implementation of IT investment and productivity enhancement. The adoption of the network QoS strategy has been introduced in order to provide guidance to managers on how to enhance the development of a successful business infrastructure using network QoS. The paper positions network QoS strategy within the business information infrastructure hierarchy. Also, network QoS-related indirect cost factors have been identified. It is also suggested that network QoS does not only improve the network hardware backbone resources, but it also helps at the same time to improve the organisational business performance.