
Editorial

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Biographical notes: Nikolaos B. Georgopoulos is Professor of Business Policy and Strategy at the Department of Business Administration of the University of Piraeus, Greece. He holds the Bachelor Degree with excellent from the Graduate School of Industrial Studies of Thessaloniki, Greece; the Master in Business Administration (MBA) Degree from Birmingham University, England; and the Master of Science (MSc) in Analysis, Design and Management of Information Systems from the London School of Economics (LSE), University of London, England. He received his Doctorate in Strategic Information Systems from the Department of Business Administration of the University of Macedonia, Greece. He is author of a number of scientific articles and four books. His research interest focuses on strategic management, knowledge management, management information systems, strategic information systems, as well as on e-business.

The term 'knowledge management' is used by business analysts to describe a great number of business practices and approaches, which are connected with the creation, processing and diffusion of knowledge and know-how. It is the most important intangible asset and the only sustainable competitive advantage of a company. The future and the success of a company are determined by its ability to utilise its most valuable resource: business knowledge. This means that it must be given particular importance on the way of its internal organisation, as well as on the mechanisms and the relationships that the company develops with its business partners. During the stage of its strategy formulation, a company should not only collect all the available information concerning its internal and external environment, but also turn this information into knowledge. In general, the technological innovations, which are introduced by the new economy, contribute to the expansion of knowledge and the distinction of information as determinative means of facing the uncertainty that characterises every new business activity.

Knowledge management constitutes an emerging discipline aiming to support enterprises in the new business environment where the notion of economics of ideas seems to be an important prerequisite for success and viability. Despite the significant progress in both theory formulation and practice, various contradictory critiques have been observed, which mainly stem from the fact that knowledge management is still in its early stages and many issues related to the basic processes, the pursued objectives and the appropriate measures to ground the knowledge management activities are still a matter of debate for both the scientific and business community.

On the other hand, the term 'Corporate Governance' refers to the relationship among the board of directors, top management and shareholders in determining the direction and performance of the corporation. Although top management is charged with creating wealth for shareholders, these managers may not always comply with their responsibilities. Recently, shareholders and various interest groups have seriously questioned the role of the board of directors in corporations. They are concerned that inside board members may use their position to feather their own nests and the outside board members often lack sufficient knowledge, involvement and enthusiasm to do an adequate job of monitoring and providing guidance to top management. The general public has not only become more aware and more critical of many boards' apparent lack of responsibility for corporate activities, it has begun to push government to demand accountability.

The objective of the special issue is to deal with Knowledge Management and Corporate Governance Systems. Papers have been special selected from the papers presented at the 1st Conference of the Hellenic Society of Systemic Studies and further reviewed by anonymous referees for two special issues. This issue includes six papers.

In the first paper 'A business model for the personal grid e-workspace', the basic aspects of an implementation model for the g-work environment are presented based on the computation, an innovative and lately introduced computation metric. It proposes a simple implementation scheme for the g-work analytical framework based on a small cooperative city scenario.

The purpose of the following paper 'Methodological approach to an analysis of the tourism system' is to examine the wider issue of tourism activity according to the rules of systemic approach, to demonstrate the necessity in facing its complex dimensions from a different analytical and methodological perspective. The paper provides a methodological framework, which represents the starting point for the analytical specification of any tourism subsystem or function under examination.

The following paper 'Business intelligence systems for Virtual Enterprises: a cybernetic approach' examines the business intelligence systems in the field of Virtual Enterprises, which by default require flexible, secure and effective management and sharing of knowledge among partners, aiming at the identification of business opportunities, the definition of their interactions within the 'alliance', and the enforcement of internal and external relationships. The systemic methodology, which is used for the achievement and the verification of the objectives of this paper, is Stafford Beer's Viable Systems Model, serving full exploitation of corporate knowledge to transform it into self-knowledge, thus improving VE productivity and efficiency, and concluding to a Viable Virtual Enterprise Intelligence Decision Cycle.

The paper entitled 'Knowledge-based approaches in strategic management: a review of the literature' provides a critical review of knowledge management literature and attempts to clarify different knowledge perspectives offering a holistic picture of one of the most controversial issues to management science. It categorises knowledge management theory to three approaches (the cognitive, the community and the network), and considers their impact to organisations.

In the next paper 'Visualising negotiation communications in setting library sharing policies', the authors introduce and discuss a flexible, semi-automated mechanism to assist in setting policies and tracking their implementation based on the Secure Content Access Negotiation System (SCENS), a web-based negotiation system. They consider how SCENS can be extended and applied to libraries, including as a tool for

reconciling multi-institutional or multi-national policies. Furthermore, the authors show how monitoring of SCENS negotiations can help set library sharing policies and resolve future conflicts by keeping track of the evolution of the sharing agreements.

The last paper 'Knowledge management in a polarised environment' addresses the knowledge evolution and its corresponding management on the basis of a polarised environment of operation. More specifically, the paper examines, what knowledge is and its relationship with data, information, wisdom and truth; the relationship of knowledge with a stable, predictable and safe environment, from the one hand, and a dynamic, fluid and turbulent environment, from the other; Knowledge Management as a representation of routine, highly structured situations as well as non-routine, unstructured situations and their corresponding attributes; finally, the resulting technology and human-centric practices and their corresponding repercussions.