Editorial

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Biographical notes: Maged Ali is a Lecturer of Business and IT at Business School, Brunel University, UK. He has achieved a multi-disciplinary research background in information systems, cross-cultural studies and business management. He has been a Visiting Lecturer at several universities in UK and abroad (Egypt, Qatar, France, KSA, Bahrain, China). He is a Business Consultant for several companies in UK and abroad (Egypt, Qatar, China, KSA, India, Brazil, South Africa). He is a member of editorial committee of several journals, as well as a co-and-mini-track chair to international conferences. He has edited special issue journals, and publishes his scholarly work in well established journals and international conferences.

Ömür Saatçıoğlu has graduated from Computer Engineering Department of Ege University. She has completed her graduate studies in Business Department of Dokuz Eylul University. Currently, she is lecturing in Maritime Faculty of Dokuz Eylul University. She is teaching logistics information systems, enterprise resource planning, total quality management and management. Her research interests include enterprise resource planning, information systems, innovation, supply chain management and knowledge management. She has close links with industry. She is advising PhD thesis on knowledge management, information systems evaluation and e-government. She has also organised international conferences on information systems and maritime.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this issue of the *International Journal of Business Information Systems*. This issue is dedicated to the publication of selected papers researching web services, eCommerce and healthcare management from the European Mediterranean Conference on Information Systems (http://www.emcis.org) (2009). In this issue, there is an eclectic presentation of research covering topical issues associated with information systems.

The first paper by Al-maghrabi and Dennis includes a model of e-shopping continuance intentions combining the revised technology acceptance model and expectation confirmation theory, measuring student gender differences with regard to continuance online shopping intentions in Saudi Arabia. The results of an online survey ($n = 234$, 61.5% women, 38.5% men) are used in a structural equation model that

confirms fit. Perceived usefulness, enjoyment, and subjective norms are determinants of online shopping continuance in Saudi Arabia. The structural weights are largely equivalent, but the paths from subjective norms to enjoyment and subjective norms to continuance intention (men) and perceived usefulness to continuous intention (women) are not supported. The main contribution is to move beyond intentions to continuance. The model explains 71% of the intention to continue shopping online. The results suggest that online strategies cannot ignore gender differences on continuance intentions. The model can be generalised across the main commercial regions of Saudi Arabia.

Czarnecki and Spiliopoulou then claim that, as the potential of a next generation network (NGN) is recognised, telecommunication companies consider switching to it. Although the implementation of an NGN seems to be merely a modification of the network infrastructure, it may trigger or require changes in the whole company, because it builds upon the separation between service and transport, a flexible bundling of services to products and the streamlining of the IT infrastructure. They propose a holistic framework, structured into the layers 'strategy', 'processes' and 'information systems' and incorporate into each layer all concepts necessary for the implementation of an NGN, as well as the alignment of these concepts. As a first proof-of-concept for our framework we have performed a case study on the introduction of NGN in a large telecommunication company; we show that our framework captures all topics that are affected by an NGN implementation.

Chinaei et al. then argue social networks have become increasingly popular over the past decade, almost in all user communities. Users, in such networks, post a variety of their (personal) information on electronic profiles – initially accessible by their friends, yet ultimately accessible by strangers, no matter transitively or directly. This is a very convenient mechanism to facilitate information sharing but it is highly susceptible to privacy violations. Most social network infrastructures do not have a privacy management component and even when they do, it lacks expressiveness and is difficult to use. No social network provides a flexible user-centric privacy management component. Chinaei et al. propose a decentralised privacy management component for social networks, based on an existing flexible access control administration model. It allows users to customise access to each piece of their information for every group in their user hierarchy. Furthermore, users can control transitive (i.e., indirect) access to their information. Users can define any policies as long as they comply with system policies. They claim that the result is a uniform model capturing both data security needs and user privacy concerns.

Sigala and Marinidis then aim to analyse the functionality and the services of web map services, and then, to investigate the types of their exploitation that in turn transform the ways in which tourism firms design their business operations and business models. To that end, Sigala and Marinidis define the concept of web map services and then analyse their functionality by conducting a thorough literature review related to the field of web services, mapping services, Web 2.0 as well as their impact on the business operations. The paper then adapts Venkatraman's (1994) model on IT-induced transformation in order to identify and classify the different levels and types of exploitation of the functionality of web map services by tourism firms. Examples of web map services' applications from the tourism industry been used for analysing the concept, the business changes and the implementation challenges of each type-level of exploitation of web map services.

Pilla et al. then propose the use of multi-agent simulation model for making decisions on business process design in emergent organisations. Pilla et al. argue that empirical and theoretical evidence makes it explicit that theoretical models are useful in defining and solving business problems. They stated that it is difficult to gauge the value of new business ideas in a real life business environment and simulation of complex business processes is a potential solution. They argue, that the simulation process can be repeated as theoretical experiments until simulated results fall within the recommended level. These decisions can then be incorporated with confidence into the real life decision-making process. Pilla et al. critically discuss challenges and opportunities in the areas of managing carbon-footprint and environmental reporting. They show how to build a multi agent simulation model of business processes as complex adaptive systems and how it can form a decision making tool. In this process, the theory of deferred action is invoked as the base theory.

Turhan and Vayvay then, claim that, as the management of supply chain gains an important role for the companies in order to be competitive in the market, healthcare sector also has effected from this wave. They add that, the main difference between the healthcare supply chain management and the other sectors is the key elements. In healthcare sector, pioneers must do highly accurate job because, in this sector, cost of an error may be someone's life. In healthcare sector, "right product must be in the right place at the right time" is really a must. Their paper shows a new modelling approach of healthcare supply chain in order to ensure this mandatory accuracy by using vendor managed inventory (VMI) technique. The core theme of this paper is that, to provide the best kind of process systems by using service-oriented architecture patterns to model vendor managed inventory in order to ensure an effective management in healthcare supply chain management.

Then, Maad et al. present a concept for development of a unified bioengineering framework that consolidates efforts in extending the geographical boundaries and outreach of primary care in Ireland and ensure its long-term scalability. This framework encompasses infrastructures, devices, systems, techniques, materials, engineering practices and socio-technical set-ups for improved access, safety and quality of care at national and global levels. In particular, they address the development of special purpose solutions, technologies and devices for healthcare from a bioengineering perspective, within the wider healthcare and biotechnology agendas in Ireland.

Finally, Alalwany and Alshawi highlight the importance of the evaluation of e-health services. They claim that a holistic e-health evaluation framework should address the aspects that are hampering healthcare services from embracing the full potential of information and communication technologies towards successful e-health initiatives. Towards building a holistic evaluation framework for e-health services, their paper examined the rationale of e-health evaluation, as the researchers argue that this aspect should be addressed first in the development of such a framework. NHS Direct which is one of the largest e-health services in the world has been chosen to discuss and validate a set of evaluation rationales and their applicability in practice.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue, and hope to receive your valuable contributions for the following issue.