Editorial

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1 Service-centric models, platforms and technologies

The service-centric approach and the strategy for the enterprises in general, and the IT organisations in particular, are discussed widely in the industrial and academic worlds.

The major software vendors like HP (2011) claim that "Service-centric IT represents a state of maturity for the IT function, enabling it to operate as a service-focused entity that is deliberately structured, organized and calibrated to power directly the corporation's strategic growth and profitability objectives".

The Enterprise Management Associates (EMA) (http://www.enterprisemanagement.com/; Drogseth, 2011) "has been both predicting and advocating a more service-centric model for asset optimization and planning for nearly a decade".

The CXO Magazine (CXO, 2013) explores the following tendency:

> "IT service management and service-oriented architecture are attracting a lot of attention. However, is this move to make IT more service-centric a fad or something more significant? … IT is no stranger to trends and fads, some of which have been successful and some of which have been exercises in throwing money away. At present, there is a big push towards a more service-centric IT model. … But there are signs that this is not a trend that will abruptly fizzle out. And there are plenty of business drivers behind the crusade to make IT more service-centric to suggest that this may be a significant – and permanent – shift in mind-set".

On the other side, from for instance government customer' point of view (Digital Government, http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/egov/digital-government/digital-government.html)

> "… the need to deliver better services to customers at a lower cost – whether an agency is supporting the war-fighter overseas, a teacher seeking classroom resources or a family figuring out how to pay for college – is pushing every level of government to look for new solutions.… Today's amazing mix of cloud computing, ever-smarter mobile devices, and collaboration tools is changing the consumer landscape and bleeding into government as both an opportunity and a challenge.…"

Besides, the findings from the academic research show that (Zhao et al., 2008) "The past few years have seen a dramatic development of service-centric computing and related technologies such as web services, service-oriented architectures, and business process automation. … Consequently, more business applications will be delivered as IT services. Service-orientation represents the most recent evolution in the corporate computing paradigms, …". Additionally, Zhao et al. (2008) believe that "service-centric computing will impact business in several ways":

1 by better align IT with business strategies and improve the quality of IT services

2 by dramatic change in the business of application development as the model-driven applications take root

3 by enabling more effective business process automation that integrate internal and external business operations (Zhao et al., 2008).

This theme is also developed by Auer et al. (2011) and Kryvinska et al. (2008).

Further, SeCSE Team (2005) discovers that "Service-centric systems are becoming the means to integrate highly heterogeneous elements in terms of services managed by different providers, running on heterogonous operating systems, and developed using various programming languages".

Also, Tossavainen et al. (2012) determine that "Building a service-centric business model requires new knowledge and capabilities in companies. … In business development, the recent focus has been on service business and how companies can utilize the service logic. The service-orientation approach is seen as the next phase in management of businesses".

Finally, but most essentially, Rodosek (2003) explores the following: "Whereas network and system components were in the focus of management research in previous years, nowadays management of services dominates management activities." We are witnessing a paradigm shift from device-oriented to service-oriented management. She (Rodosek, 2003) also claims "the management of the underlying infrastructure with respect to the delivered services and agreed service level agreements is certainly the fundamental challenge". The similar observations are performed also in Kryvinska (2010).

Accordingly, we would like to share in this special issue the practices and original ideas on the integrative perceptions on service-centric models, platforms, and technologies.

2 Special issue content

There were recommended five remarkable papers for the appearance in this special issue. They highlight different aspects of the service-centric models, platforms, and technologies.

Accordingly, the paper authored by Demydov et al., 'Analysis of service workflows distribution and service delivery platform parameters', emphasises the key technical issues of service workflow distribution with qualitative ensuring approach to obtain SDP parameters needed to get service reliability under specified SLAs.

In the 'Models and mechanisms for traffic balancing of IPTV VoD service', Hayali et al. suggest specific models to evaluate the balancing mechanisms when handling traffic of IPTV service. He also performs an analysis of each of these mechanisms using the IPTV service traffic model.

The paper 'Business value assessment of services re-use on SOA using appropriate methodologies, metrics and models', authored by Kryvinska et al., explores the role of SOA for services re-use. And, it focuses on the methodologies, metrics and models that are able to measure the business value of the re-use of SOA-based services.

In the paper entitled 'Consumers purchasing new homes – trust and taste building through e-service and competence in the housing market', Autio and Autio examine the issues of how the service company's and the customers' experiences meet each other in service innovation practices. It is studied the development of a customer-oriented electronic service in a construction company.

Finally, Anabori, 'The role of trust in risk sharing and innovativeness of service firms in Nigeria', analyses the role of trust in innovation and risk sharing among service firms in Nigeria. His research findings imply that the impersonal form in particular plays an important role in determining organisational innovativeness.

The entire special explores the range of the challenges in the field of service-centric models, platforms, and technologies, which in turn seems to be interdisciplinary. We believe that with the field reaching maturity new solutions and techniques will be developed. And, thus, this special issue can serve as roadmap for further research in this specific area.

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