
Editorial

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The social and economic complexity of our times sets off severe changes in the logics of markets and business systems. Business scenarios today are dynamic, inter-connected, nonlinear, and characterised by emergence of unpredictable phenomena properties in one word they are ‘complex’ (Dominici, 2012a).

Considering business systems as complex systems means that it is not possible to comprehend them by taking into account only their components as separate and separable entities (Dominici and Levanti, 2011). Moreover, a complex system is that system that does not allow any algorithm to predict its future states. This implies that there is no perfect ‘model’ or ‘best practice’ that is universally valid to achieve business goals and that all the efforts can only count on the resilience of the business system (i.e., the firm, the organisation, the market) and on its managerial capability to grasp and proactively manipulate actual and future scenarios (Dominici, 2012b).

Organisations cannot be only regarded as isolated systems. Each time we use a reductionist logic to identify a system, we make a distinction between what is inside and what is ‘out there’ outside the system that is therefore seen as a black box (Beer, 1972; Espejo and Reyes, 2011).

These considerations imply the need for a paradigm shift that can take business science beyond the analytical-reductionist approach, towards a more wide-ranging systemic perspective. To this aim, it is not necessary to fully discard all the inventions that the analytic-reductionist approach has brought to science, nevertheless it necessary to move ahead, being conscious that the analytic-reductionist approaches are not adequate for achieving a deeper understanding of complex business systems. That is why, without totally discarding the previous approaches, we must go further to embrace a systemic view of markets and business systems.

Managing complex markets and business systems calls for new managerial capabilities, skilled to attain resilience and to find new ways for sustainable economic and social growth. In today business context, the ability of managers and consultants to make ‘sense’ and to perceive the ‘sense of events’ is what may lead to the achievement of renewed and sustainable business goals. This can be done by thinking in terms of the ‘possible’, and dealing with the ‘emergent’ (Pitasi and Dominici, 2012).

This new proactive managerial style overcomes the mere ability of classifying into predefined models and patterns that was the goal of the analytic-reductionist approaches.

In business and social context, in continuous transformation and change, managers must be able to guide organisations towards the capability of absorbing the changes and to influence the business context. The 'liquid' state of global society (Bauman, 2000), implies that intangible and irrational aspects manifest prominently in consumer choice (Pitasi and Dominici, 2012). The very existence of marketing implies that the consumer does not choose as a 'homo oeconomicus' who judges tangible costs and utility, on the contrary consumers (as individuals or groups) pursue their psychological attitudes and culture considering emotional and symbolic values of goods (Dominici et al., 2013).

Another characteristic of complex business systems to be taken into account by the management is that of 'emergency'. An emergency, in a complex system, is an appearance of something (e.g., a behavior or a new entity) that is 'new and unpredictable' from the point of view of the planner (Shaw, 1997).

To manage 'emergencies', it is essential that the firm is resilient and to reflect and understand its different levels of relations (i.e., consonance or structural coupling) within the organisational system and towards its context. To be viable in a context, an organisation needs to be able to continuously reinvent itself by being able to change its structure to adapt (Golinelli, 2010).

To manage this paradigm shift in markets and business systems, academics and managers need to develop new approaches, methodologies and tools based on systems thinking.

The challenge that the *International Journal of Markets and Business Systems* is taking up is to deal with the above mentioned paradigm shift in business science by becoming an arena of conversations between academics and managers who are aware of the key importance of developing new approaches. Even if we are aware that the aim of this journal is very ambitious we believe that beginning a project without ambition means to fail in advance. This ambition is the same of the Business Systems Laboratory (of which this is the official journal) that since 2012 has achieved to gather every year hundreds of academics and practitioners from more than fifty countries all over the world to share their researches and different points of views. I wish that many valid authors will take up this challenge, and will supply their ideas to make this journal a place of conversation and discussion among bright minds full of bright ideas, who are not afraid to be proactive and bold for the advancement of business science.

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