Editorial

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Biographical notes: Piet Kommers is a Professor of UNESCO Learning Technologies and affiliated with the Universities of Twente and Utrecht, The Netherlands. His specialty is social media for communication and organisation. As Conference Co-chair of the IADIS multi-conference, he initiated the conferences of web-based communities and social media, e-society, mobile learning and international higher education. He is a Professor at the UNESCO Institute for Eastern European Studies in Educational Technology and Adjunct Professor at Curtin University in Perth, Australia.

Margriet Simmerling is a Peer Consultant/Senior Manager for R&D projects in the area of e-society and web-based communities. She participated in the advisory board for the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs and is active as a reviewer for the European Commission. She designs and moderates e-learning modules and workshops e-learning modules and workshops in the domain of education technology and psychology at the PhD level.

Tareq Rasul received his Doctorate in Marketing in 2012 from the University of South Australia. Prior to which he received his MBA from the University of East London, UK in 2006. The central focus of his research is 'relationship marketing', 'e-learning' and 'social media'. He has ten years of teaching experience in both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. He has also published articles in different journals and is currently teaching marketing and related subjects at Australian Institute of Business.

In this special issue, research from Australia, the UK, the USA, Russia, Slovakia, Poland and Lebanon comes together and provides input to new progress on the developments around web-based communities and social media. The addressed topics are timely and essential for researchers, managers and communication advisors in their business environments. In this issue, you find the state-of-the-art research and you find reports about the usage of Facebook, Twitter, Pokémon and Afreeca TV. But also we pay attention to the academic world.

1   The article 'The use of Facebook pages as voluntary disclosure media: an analysis of intellectual capital disclosures in ASX 200 companies' allows the reader to see how intellectual capital is operating through Facebook postings. Facebook is in fact a web-based community and Yunita Anwar and Martin Surya Mulyadi report of intellectual capital and how it operates. They are making the contribution on further knowledge about how it works and how capital is built between the user of the community and the company.

2   The article 'Security information sharing via Twitter: 'Heartbleed' as a case study' is an exploratory case study examining an event which may have led to behaviour change. Debora Jeske et al. address other questions relate to identifying leading group debates in Twitter. The study provides insight into information sharing, and community of influence.

3   The article 'Broadcasting upon a shooting star: investigating the success of Afreeca TV's livestream personal broadcast model' discusses the social media platform and online personal broadcasting service, Afreeca TV, that incorporates a live stream self-broadcasting model accompanied by a live chat window. Soo-Kwang Oh and Ms. Hyun-Ju Choi discuss the key elements of success:

    • real-time audience participation/influence on broadcasts

    • sociality offered through companionship and virtual community

    • virtual celebrity arising from the platform's unique fan culture

    • convenient expression of satisfaction through the unique star balloon feature

    • diversified content and show structure fulfilling the changing needs of audiences

    • a live-cast management system ensuring the quality of content and interactions.

4   How to influence the commitment of members of a virtual community?
    Majharul Talukder and Ali Quazi discuss how satisfaction is an important factor and introduce three broad categories of predictor variables. In the article 'Developing a research framework for virtual community systems' both academic and commercial applications are highlighted.

5   The article 'Identification of differences in university e-environment between selected EU and non-EU countries using knowledge mining methods: project IRNet case study' reports on findings collected via IRNet. In fact, IRNET is a meta web community as IRNet itself is a hybrid community, both F2F and web-based. But also IRNet is a community that anticipates to web communities among universities, university teachers and students. Martin Drlík, Peter Švec, Jozef Kapusta, Michal Munk, Tatiana Noskova, Tatiana Pavlova, Olga Yakovleva, Nataliia Morze and Eugenia Smyrnova-Trybulska provide and overview of institutional infrastructures for ICT didactics.

6   Last but not least, we present a timely article and right on spot in respect to new branding mechanisms. Zahy B. Ramadan and Maya F. Farah discuss in the article 'The Pokémonisation of the first moment of truth' how virtualisation and gamification may affect customers' sense of community.

This compilation of articles demonstrates that there is a growing awareness that social networks in combination with face-to-face settings miss the essence of human commitment and trust: It is the inevitable need for sensing a community; a shared responsibility for the overall quality of togetherness. Looking back to the recent awakening doubts on ultimate liberalisation in sectors like public-, health, transport service and education, it seems that further going globalisation has its price. For *IJWBC*, it is an increasing urgency to monitor the shift in value spectrum around individualistic, collectivistic and communitarian symptoms that arise at the horizon of new coming projects as just described. May it feed your curiosity and participation in trend watching with us.