

Preface for the Second Edition

Nearly four years have past by since the first edition of our book was published and we are very happy that the book has found its market and even more about the feedback from those readers who took some time to share their opinions about the first edition with us. As time has gone by, a lot has happened both in the development and adoption of technologies powering enterprise knowledge infrastructures and in the professional and personal lives of the authors. After our joint time at Martin-Luther-University of Halle-Wittenberg, life paths of the authors split again, so that our team turned into a virtual one, geographically spread from Hamburg via Hof to Innsbruck. Co-authoring this edition provided us with numerous opportunities to reinforce our excitement about how convenient it is to collaborate across locations. We have gained plenty of new experiences in research as well as in practice and several of them have been included in this new edition.

One surprising experience is that despite all changes in information technologies, like the advent of Web 2.0 and the corresponding acceleration of browser-based applications as well as the explosion of user-generated contents, the core proposition of the book still remains an attractive and challenging one. The need for integration of existing systems instead of introduction of new isolated ones is unchanged. It typically takes many years until new technologies are adopted, particularly in traditional businesses and organizations. There are many reasons for this phenomenon which has been profoundly described in numerous technology-adoption models in the literature. The majority of enterprises does not qualify as IT innovators and thus refrains from investing into what could be a hype without prove that there are measurable benefits to be gained. Integration efforts are especially challenging endeavors because they are often spanning organizational units and need sponsors and champions that think in a more holistic way instead of single system classes. Not only technical boundaries have to be bridged, but also organizational boundaries with people fearful about losing power over their system if it is integrated into the overall infrastructure. So, enterprise knowledge infrastructures can be seen as complementing organizational efforts to bridge departmental boundaries with process-orientation, in this case knowledge processes, not business processes as with ERP solutions.

The second edition reflects this understanding of enterprise knowledge infrastructures by rearranging knowledge services into the 5-I model of knowledge maturing. This new substructure of the book is intended to allow for better teaching and learning. It takes on a more dynamic, process-oriented perspective on knowledge and knowledge services. The authors hope that the major additions to knowledge services make the vision of the book more comprehensible. The edition has been profoundly extended and completely revised throughout all chapters. Product examples and overviews have been updated to the latest market data. Updated definitions and conceptual foundations ease understanding of the subject matter. Case examples have been added for each main chapter and, last but not least, the general didactic approach of the book has been improved.

Such an effort in addition to three full-time jobs is only possible with numerous helping hands for proof-reading, suggestions for further improvements and taking over some other

tasks unrelated with the book in order to free time which we could invest in thinking, discussing and writing. The latter is especially true for our partners who have been most understanding about us indulging into writing a book which cannot be taken for granted at all. We also like to thank our students and colleagues, the team at the Dept. of Information Systems, School of Business at the University of Innsbruck, and especially Nadine Amende, Dominik Grimm, Andreas Kaschig, Tanja Kohn, Alexander Sandow and Stefan Thalmann. Some of them are former students who have decided to take on an academic career and have expanded our social network to new universities and renewed the links to colleagues with established relationships. We find it essential to keep exchanging opinions, especially with those having different professional backgrounds as they bring in new ideas and different views. We hope that you, the readers, find the book inspiring for further exploring ways how IT can increase productivity of knowledge work in the 21st century. Finally, we would like to invite you to share your opinion about our book and the ideas behind most easily by email (ronald.maier@uibk.ac.at, thomas.haedrich@opentext.com, rene.peinl@hotmail.de).

Ronald Maier
Thomas Hädrich
René Peinl

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Maeder, M.; Hädrich, Th.; Peinl, R.

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