

Preface

Service Research and Innovation: Emerging Developments

In recent years, there is a growing recognition among researchers and policy makers of the primacy of the service sector in the overall economic landscape of both developed and developing countries. This, however, is not fully reflected in the research priorities of universities, research agencies in both the public and private sector that engage in applied research, and funding bodies world-wide. The productivity levels in the service sector continue to lag behind the traditional goods-based manufacturing, mining, and agricultural sectors. Yet, service industries offer significant potential for large-scale innovation and productivity growth by exploiting the developments in information, communications, and related technologies. Moreover, the gap between goods and services-based industries is narrowing as a result of what has come to be referred to as the “servitization” of many of the activities in the goods production life cycle.

The papers included in this edited book represent a small sample of contemporary research that attempts to document and advance the transformative role of the evolving service sector and to expand on the critical role of the information and communications technologies (ICT) in this transformation. The contributions are multidisciplinary in scope and cover strategic, organizational, and technological dimensions. They range from purely conceptual to concrete implementations and testing of service-related technological platforms. Taken together, these papers provide a snapshot of the critical concerns and developments in service-related research and cover some of the key areas of research focus.

The eight contributions included in this volume were selected from the 18 papers submitted to the Third Australasian Conference on Service Research and Innovation held in Sydney, Australia, during November 27–29, 2013. Each paper received three reviews. Based on the reviews, the authors of the selected papers were given the opportunity to revise and resubmit their papers for publication in this proceedings volume.

The first two papers by Vijaya Murthy and Olivera Marjanovic (“Understanding a Transformation Process from Product-Centric to Customer-Centric Services in a Financial Institution – A Work System Perspective”) and Eng K. Chew (“An Integrative Design Framework for New Service Development”) provide a coherent characterization of the “service system,” which constitutes the basic unit of analysis in the broader discourse on services and service economy. The central thrust of the Murthy and Marjanovic paper is on the transition from a *product-centric* to a *customer-and-service-centric view* of organizations and the strategic, cultural, and organizational changes that this transition entails. The transition process is analyzed through the theoretical lens provided by work systems theory (WST). The empirical segment of the paper is a comprehensive case study of a financial services company that details the transition of its services structured around specific financial products to

new ones re-designed around the customer. This paper illustrates the main challenges and tensions during three distinct phases of the transition and provides a glimpse of the competitive effects of the transformation. Eng K. Chew adopts a normative design perspective. He proposes and exemplifies a customer-centric, integrative design framework for new service development (NSD). The need for the design framework to be aligned with the organization's service strategy is emphasized.

The next three papers by Chhetri et al. ("Smart Cloud Broker – Test Drive the Cloud Before You Buy"), Karunakaran et al. ("Decisions, Models and Opportunities in Cloud Computing Economics: A Review of Research on Pricing and Markets"), and Joukhadar and Rabhi ("Effective Governance During SOA Lifecycle – Theory and Practice") deal with the technology infrastructure for services in general and service computing in particular. Cloud platforms and service-oriented architecture models in combination offer one of the most significant technological innovations that has transformed the way many services are conceptualized and delivered. The paper by Chetri et al. makes an important contribution to the problem of cloud vendor selection by developing and testing the Smart CloudBench, which is a suite of software tools that enables prospective purchasers of cloud infrastructure services to test drive the diverse offerings and to select the best alternative based on price, specification profile, and performance. This automated, on-demand, and customizable tool has been tested extensively and has the potential to take much of the guesswork out of cloud service acquisition decisions. Karunakaran et al. provide a comprehensive review of the key decisions and models in the context of the economics of cloud computing. Joukhadar and Rabhi highlight the importance of service-oriented architecture (SOA) governance and attempt to analyze the gap between theory and practice in this area. This paper also identifies the specific roles of governance in the different stages of the SOA lifecycle.

The final set of three papers deal with emerging concerns and domain-specific issues in service-related research. Hashmi et al. ("Normative Requirements for Business Process Compliance") address the problem of ensuring the regulatory compliance of the underlying business processes. The authors present the development and implementation of a compliance checking methodology. A preliminary evaluation of the implemented system is also included. Chen and Rabhi ("An RDR-Based Approach for Event Data Analysis") propose a useful approach to detecting event patterns using a rules learning framework called ripple-down rules (RDR) and demonstrate its capabilities based on a real-world scenario involving financial data analysis. Motamari ("A Six-Cell Services Comparison Model for Healthcare") proposes a healthcare service design framework based on a comprehensive review of the extant literature of healthcare services, especially in the context of the needs of developing countries.

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Papers

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