

Preface

Twenty years ago mass customization was acknowledged as the “New Frontier in Business Competition.” The first MCPC conference was hosted by Hong Kong University of Science and Technology in 2001. Since then the MCPC conference has grown to become the primary conference for presenting and discussing current issues and recent developments within the fields of mass customization, personalization, and customer co-creation. The 2015 MCPC conference, the eighth in the series, for which the contributions are presented in this book, was hosted by the School of Management at the University du Québec in Montréal, Canada. For this edition, the emphasis was placed on “managing complexity.”

Research on management in general, and on mass customization more specifically, has evolved tremendously over the last few years. Often more focused on the link between theory and practice, it has allowed researchers and practitioners to present new viable business models. Yet, relying on the most recent technological advances, these new business models often increase the level of complexity in management. The creation of added value and market differentiation are a direct result of one’s ability to manage this complexity. Hence, since operational excellence is strongly correlated to the ability to simplify complex entities, good managers must have an intuitive feel for this characteristic, understand it, and work hard to reduce it where possible. Unfortunately, the literature more often obscures the subject more than it reveals it.

The MCPC 2015 was a multitrack conference featuring a combination of high profile keynotes with expert talks, panel discussions, paper sessions, workshops, receptions, and much more. While it was devoted to sharing and discussing the latest research in the field, MCPC 2015 strongly emphasized real-life applications. The MCPC conference is truly unique among conferences in that, since its beginning, it has attracted an equal share of practitioners and academics/researchers. This year, more than 200 academics, entrepreneurs, and management experts presented the most recent developments in mass customization and co-creation. A total of 60 conferences (academic, projects, case studies, etc.) were offered to the participants.

Recognized for the quality of its practice-oriented education, the excellence of its applied research, and its international presence, the School of Management (ESG

UQAM) asserts its leadership with a bold vision for the future. In presenting the MCPC 2015 conference, it strived to engage academics, business leaders, and consultants in fundamental debates on managing complexity.

This book presents the latest research from the worldwide MCPC community bringing together the new thoughts and results from various disciplines within the topics of:

- Complexity management of knowledge-based systems in manufacturing design and production
- Sustainable mass customization
- Fashion, apparel, and footwear applications
- Manufacturing systems for MCPC
- Product modeling
- Choice navigation
- MCPC applications
- Solution space development
- Co-creation and open innovation

All papers have been peer reviewed to ensure the same high quality as seen on previous MCPC conferences.

The organizing committee would like to thank the MCPC community for the support for this conference, hoping that all participants, academic and industrial, will benefit from the presentations and discussions.

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Managing Complexity

Proceedings of the 8th World Conference on Mass Customization, Personalization, and Co-Creation (MCPC 2015), Montreal, Canada, October 20th-22th, 2015
Bellemare, J.; Carrier, S.; Nielsen, K.; Piller, F.T. (Eds.)
2017, XIV, 470 p. 129 illus., 59 illus. in color., Hardcover
ISBN: 978-3-319-29056-0