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EDITORIAL

The Services Science and Innovation Series

Organizations are increasingly finding themselves facing complex and dynamic markets and operating environments. They are constantly striving to understand and respond to changing expectations and realities: customers; governments; markets; economic and social instabilities; and, even the environment; are combining forces to create greater instability and complexity. These forces challenge the underpinning supply chain processes and philosophies that support today's global players. Organizations have to both better sense and respond to changes in their business environment. There is a growing realisation, from both practitioners and academics (Lee, 2003), that to succeed in developing and sustaining competitive advantage enterprises must: identify challenges and opportunities quickly and succinctly, while managing the transition process in a innovatory manner.

Organizations are waking up to the realisation that their supply chain processes are the engines by which they drive sustainable performance. However, these processes can not be run purely as 'technology centric' activities, but must consider, if innovation and an ability to manage transformation are key, the social and cultural, as well as management practice aspects of the organization. Service science is an emerging discipline that aims to combine fundamental science and engineering theories, models and applications with facets of the management field, particularly knowledge, supply chain and change management, in order to enhance and advance service innovation. Service innovation is fast becoming the key driver of socio-economic growth and as such warrants increasing academic and commercial research attention (Paulson, 2006). IBM and associated academic (Chesbrough *et al.*, 2006; Allen *et al.*, 2006) governmental and commercial partners have been in the vanguard of those pioneering and promoting service science (Paulson, 2006; Allen *et al.*, 2006). Activity to date has, however, focused on what might be considered the technological underpinnings of the new discipline (Abe, 2005) but it is clear to all concerned that what is required is a cross-disciplinary collaboration if the power of service innovation capability is to be truly harnessed (Chesbrough *et al.*, 2006; Paulson, 2006; Allen *et al.*, 2006; Abe, 2005).

The recently launched Complex Services Innovation Research Network is just one example of the growing interest in services science and innovation. CSIRN (www.gla.ac.uk/departments/csirn) have invited a range of academics and practitioners, representing the multiple facets of the services science community, to contribute to a series of papers to be published in the EMJ over the next year. The core aim being to stimulate a debate around the topic of services science and innovation that engages with the multiple stakeholders: academics students and practitioners from a range of disciples and backgrounds. A *blog*, organized by Elsevier (http://topics.scirus.com/Services_Science_and_Innovation.html), will act both as a debating forum and as a knowledge hub: CSIRN will manage the site, analyse the inputs and disseminate the outcomes.

We anticipate that the series will consist of around seven papers; the uncertainty is due only to our desire, and that of the EMJ editorial team, to encourage others to come forward with contributions. The first paper (Paton and McLaughlin), as well as acting as an introduction to the series, explores issues surrounding the need to capitalise on the innovative potential of the supply chain through the effective management of the knowledge transfer process. It articulates a case for ensuring that we do not adopt a too puritanical view of innovation and ignore the importance of the service exchange. Sustainable growth, it is argued, is based upon identifying, supporting and nurturing meaningful service exchanges that exploit, develop and embody value added knowledge transfer within and across industry.

In the second paper of the series, *'On Value and Value Co-Creation: A Service Systems and Service Logic Perspective'*, Stephen Vargo (University of Hawai'i) and Paul Maglio (IBM Almaden Research Centre) trace the development of the alternative logics of economic exchange and their associated meanings of value. They go on to explore the S-D (services dominant) logic conceptualisation of value-creation and service exchange from a services science

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perspective: arguing that S-D logic is fundamental to our understanding. The third paper in the series maintains the IBM connection: Jeanette Blomberg (IBM Almaden Research Center) critically examines, in a paper entitled, *'Negotiating Meaning of Shared Information in Service System Encounters'*, the underlying assumptions of the claim that *access* to information is at the heart of the accountability and trust problem in service systems. The analysis is informed by an ethnographic study of the interactions between IT outsourcing project executives of a large service provider and their clients.

The four remaining papers in the series see contributions from Andrea Ordanini, Phil Beaumont and Martin Beirne. Ordanini and Paolo Pasini (Bocconi University) examine, through in-depth case studies, the introduction of a new generation SOA (Services Orientated Architecture) to both a manufacturing and services firm. They explore, in a paper entitled, *'Service co-production and value co-creation: the case for a service-oriented architecture (SOA)'*, the opportunities and challenges of managing such a project to achieve the co-productive customer inputs required to truly add value.

Beaumont, Judy Pate and Sandra Stewart (University of Glasgow) delve into the world of the remote worker. Enterprises are increasingly turning towards emergent forms of work organization: a distributed, connected and well-resourced knowledge led workforce operating, in the main, from home. Beaumont et al in this paper ask the question: *Managing Remote Workers: More of a challenge than Opportunity?* There aim is twofold, firstly, to unpack the major challenges facing both the management and the workforce posed by remote working, and secondly to outline a preliminary framework of analysis which will assist in both the understanding and management of remote workers. Beirne (University of Glasgow) and Chris Cromack (IBM, UK) will continue the work and organization theme. Their contribution will take the form of a position paper: mapping out key issues, challenges and opportunities on the social side of business transformation. Essentially they offer the reader a concise research agenda based around what they term the '*Third Dimension*': the social and cultural axis of services science.

The series concludes with another look at the supply chain. Douglas Macbeth (University of Southampton) will return, based on his extensive knowledge and experience of supply chain management, to the need to generate and exploit innovation. His paper, entitled *'Services Science and Supply Chain Transparency: Recognition of the need for innovative solutions'*, argues that in many ways we know what is needed in terms of more open, transparent, interchanges along the length of the chain, but we still often fail to deliver. Macbeth suggests that managers when faced with enormities of the challenges transparency brings, and the need to manage the present operational situation, often revert to old and familiar behaviours. This paper examines, drawing down upon services science, the managerial issues and barriers to change and scopes an integrated solution.

We hope the services science series promotes an ongoing dialogue: one that some consider may even lead to an exciting new integrated discipline; and thank the EMJ for the opportunity to edit and source the inputs. The Elsevier *blog*, http://topics.scirus.com/Services_Science_and_Innovation.html, is open for business: we look forward to your comments, suggestions and observations.

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