Introduction to the Designing, Deploying, and Evaluating Tools and Techniques to Support Team Collaboration Minitrack

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Recent data show that collaboration is a key driver of performance in organizations. The impact of collaboration on organizational performance is more critical than strategic orientation or market and technological turbulence. Yet successful collaboration does not come without difficulty. Groups and teams need to overcome collaboration challenges such as groupthink, dominance, lack of efficiency and lack of focus. Successful collaboration requires support based on purposeful guidance and interventions to create groups and teams, to design and deploy processes, to design and deploy technology, to support leaders or facilitators, and to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of information processing. The challenge for researchers and practitioners alike is to design sustainable processes and systems within and between organizations that allow people, groups and teams to collaborate successfully. This challenge has many dimensions, including a technical, a behavioral, a social, an emotional, an economical, and a political. This minitrack invites papers that address the design and deployment of collaboration processes and systems within and between organizations, groups, and teams.

This minitrack provides one of the key international platforms on which the following issues can be discussed:

1. Facilitation methods, techniques, patterns, and thinkLets to support and improve (a)synchronous collaboration between co-located and distributed people, teams, or groups.
2. The design, application, and evaluation of collaboration support technologies; G(D)SS, groupware and meeting support technology.
3. Collaboration Engineering and the design, codification and reuse of work practices and pattern languages for group collaboration to create self-sustaining collaboration support in organizations.
4. Theoretical foundations and practical approaches to model and design high quality collaborative work practices.

This year’s minitrack attracted a large number of submissions from which 13 were selected to be presented at the conference. These thirteen are organized into four themed sessions.

The first session addresses methodical and methodological issues concerning the design, deployment, and evaluation of collaboration techniques and technologies. Papers in this session focus on prediction the number of ideas in brainstorming sessions, collaboration process analysis frameworks, the use of stories in patterns of collaboration, and use of various research methods in Collaboration Engineering.

The second sessions focuses on design issues. The first two papers in this session propose ontologies for ActionCenters and Web portal design. The third paper argues how collaborative engineering informs Collaboration Engineering.

The third session includes papers that focus on organizational issues. The first two papers present, discuss, and evaluate approaches and collaboration tools to support scientific collaboration. The third paper discusses organizational factors inhibiting the design of emergency management information systems.

The final session in this minitrack presents applications of collaboration analysis and design techniques. The first paper introduces a Collaboration Maturity Model to assess the collaboration capacity in teams. The second paper uses the Seven Layer Model of Collaboration to analyze collaborative military decision making processes. The final paper describes a repeatable collaboration process to explore business process improvement alternatives.

We thank the authors for submitting their work to make this another engaging minitrack. We hope you enjoy the papers and their presentation at the conference.