EDITORIAL

Co-Innovation and Collaborative Networks

During October 2009, PRO-VE - IFIP Working Conference on Virtual Enterprises commemorated its 10th Anniversary as a continuous series of successful conferences offering researchers and practitioners a major opportunity for the presentation and discussion of both latest research developments and industrial practice case studies in the new scientific discipline of Collaborative Networks.

This special issue on Co-Innovation and Collaborative Networks gathers extended versions of 10 selected papers from PRO-VE'09 conference, held in Thessaloniki, Greece, under the theme: “Leveraging Knowledge for Innovation in Collaborative Networks”. The papers selection was based on a reviewing process carried out by experts in the area and the selected papers were further revised and extended. The special issue tries to present a balanced overview of concepts, methods and tools, as well as business models and case studies related to collaborative innovation networks.

Collaborative Networked Organisations and Customer Communities: Value Co-Creation and Co-Innovation in the Networking Era - by Romero and Molina, introduces an overview on network structures as a source of joint value creation and open innovation. The paper describes a literature review on value co-creation and co-innovation concepts and styles, and proposes a reference framework for creating ‘interface networks’ as enablers for linking networked organisations and customer communities to support the establishment of sustainable user-driven and collaborative innovation networks.

Eschenbächer et al. present a collaborative network relationship analysis framework in their work - Improving Distributed Innovation Processes in Virtual Organisations through the Evaluation of Collaboration Intensities - as a strategic tool to study ‘collaboration intensities’ to support the management of distributed innovation processes in networked environments. The paper includes a set of case studies to demonstrate the applicability of this tool in improving the distributed innovation processes that take place within virtual organisations.

In their contribution entitled - How Teams in Networked Organisations develop Collaborative Capability: Processes, Critical Incidents, and Success Factors - Ulbrich et al. present a study on ‘collaborative capability’ of teams in networked organisations focusing on the capabilities of single organisations and on their group dynamics to identify six critical success factors for successful collaboration and network management in co-innovation processes. The study was carried-out in three networked organisations.

Extended Competencies Model for Collaborative Networks - by Rosas et al., undertakes the assessment of organisations’ hard and soft competencies in order to help networked organisations to find ‘competencies fitness’ to better select their network partners. The assessment tool is based on an extended competencies model that allows the construction of adjusted competencies profiles and levels to determine the competency requirements of collaboration opportunities such as co-innovation initiatives in industrial contexts.

Msanjila and Afsarmanesh address the evolution of ‘trustworthiness’ as a way to raise the understanding of trust concept and its applicability to enhance and mediate collaboration among organisations. Their paper named - On Modelling Evolution of Trust in Organisations towards Mediating Collaboration - studies different trust models in organisations as well as the characterisation of the lifecycle of trust to establish fruitful collaborations, and introduces a trust management system as a tool to enhance and mediate trust evolution in collaborative innovation networks.

Supporting Collaborative Project Management - by Ollus et al., presents an innovative approach for ‘collaborative project management’ focusing on the support of collaboration and communication in globally distributed projects. Their proposal includes a collaborative project management tool intended for supporting projects’ aims alignment and bridging the possible gaps that may exist within collaborative projects (e.g. co-innovation projects).

Al-Ashaab et al. introduce an adapted Balanced Scorecard as a measurement tool to assess the impact of collaborative research projects under an ‘open innovation strategy’. Their contribution - A Balanced Scorecard for Measuring the Impact of Industry-University Collaboration - proposes a scorecard model to measure the outcomes of collaborative research and presents two case studies of how companies are using this tool to measure their innovation outcomes.

The authors, Loss and Crane, in Agile Business Models: An Approach to Support Collaborative Networks, explore the concept of the ‘agile business models’ for collaborative networks and identify the levers and barriers for developing innovative business models for co-innovation networks.

A Comprehensive Framework for Collaborative Networked Innovation - by Berasategi et al., presents an innovation framework including a reference model, a set of analysis tools and a methodology for implementing co-innovation processes within collaborative networks. The framework was developed based on the findings of an action research project carried out in real collaborative innovation networks.

Finally, Buedew et al. introduce a living lab approach focused on community building and active user involvement in the process of developing and evaluating new collaboration concepts and tools in user-centric and co-innovation networks. Their paper titled - Enhancing Collaboration in Communities of Professionals using a Living Lab Approach - presents a valuable framework to facilitate innovation in collaborative work environments to enhance professional communities.

The Guest Editors would like to thank all the authors and referees for their contributions to this special issue and hope that it becomes a valuable material to those interested in the advances and challenges in co-innovation networks.

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