Information Systems Success and Benefits Realization

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Nowadays, information systems (IS) are acquired and implemented through varying means: as service (cloud computing), as configurations to large enterprise systems, as packaged software, or through dedicated development. It is common that all these aim at successful and beneficial installation of a new system. However, despite existing tracks of research on these topics, according to Gartner reports and popular press articles, numerous information systems acquisition projects fail in terms of costs, schedules, and objectives [3]. Models and methods for understanding IS success and benefits, benefits realization of information technology (IT) investments at large, realizing the benefits of information systems in general, proactively measuring them before renewal, or retrospectively analyzing them at the project have largely remained untouched.

Despite the number of problematic IS projects, the topic is still little understood in the researcher community. For example, such questions as how to proactively set measurable objectives for IS benefits, how to choose an appropriate acquisition strategy and method for maximum benefits, how to execute the acquisition project successfully, and how to measure and analyze benefits of IS investments after the project have been left largely intact – even though these are significant issues for practitioners and economy. For example the famous IS success model [1, 4] identifies the benefit realization model, while theorizing about the phenomena on an abstract level. Hence, although a recent Delphi study identified benefits realization as the most important issue to be considered by IS procurement professionals in the public sector [2], our understanding of success and benefits of IS investments remains rather abstract in practice. This is problematic as, e.g., in Norway, all public ICT acquisitions need to justify rather detailed benefits to the public or to the civil servants proactively, before the acquisition takes place. Although the literature documents several methods and techniques for benefits justification, measurement, management and realization, they have not reached wide utilization in practice. The situation is, up to a large extent, identical in the private sector as, for instance, business cases are difficult to write and different IS initiations and implementations are difficult to compare.

This minitrack presents three papers that contribute to different conceptual viewpoints related to IS success and benefits: *process orientation* to measurement of business value of IT infrastructures, *IT leadership* and *IT climate* as pre-requisites for organizational performance, and *effective use* of IT artifacts.

- Cundius and Alt suggest a process-oriented model to assess organizational benefits of real-time IT infrastructures. Use of the model is illustrated through a case study from the automotive industry.
- Wunderlich and Beck analyze how IT leadership and IT climate can make a difference in knowledge-intensive industries. Their findings confirm the importance of organization-wide IS knowledge in order to improve organizational performance.
- Marchand and Raymond report a field study on performance management systems in small- and medium-sized companies. Their findings contribute to empirical grounding, validity, and relevance of the concept of effective use of IT artifacts.

References

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