

## Illuminating the Dark Side of Knowledge

Jan Kietzmann  
University of Victoria  
jkietzma@uvic.ca

Ian McCarthy  
Simon Fraser University  
imccarth@sfu.ca

David Hannah  
Simon Fraser University  
drhannah@sfu.ca

Information systems of various kinds have been transforming how individuals, communities and organizations create, share and consume information and knowledge with each other and with firms (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011). At an exciting time of rapid technological advancements (e.g., of AI, cognitive computing), many studies highlight the “bright side” of knowledge and the systems used to manage it. Examples include how social media democratize engagement between firms and consumers or how firms can improve public relations, customer service, product development, or personnel decision making. None of these business activities are imaginable anymore without some sort of systems involvement.

Regardless of the numerous opportunities that knowledge and information systems offer, there is undoubtedly a “dark side” that holds enormous risks for individuals, communities, organizations and even whole societies (Baccarella et al., 2019).

Therefore, despite the many benefits promised, significant negative or detrimental consequences of knowledge and information systems applications (e.g., deepfakes (Kietzmann et al, forthcoming)) are worthy of research attention. Further theoretical as well as

empirical work is needed to better understand this dark side.

Authors in this mini-track have accepted this challenge. Mark Hoksbergen, Johnny Chan, Gabrielle Peko, and David Sundaram will be discussing Counterbalancing the Asymmetric Information Paradigm on High-Value Low-Frequency Transactions.

Next, Reagan Smith and Richard Frank will present their work entitled Dishing the Deets: How Dark-Web Users Teach each other about International Drug Shipments.

### References

- Baccarella, C. V., Wagner, T. F., Kietzmann, J. H., & McCarthy, I. P. (2018). Social media? It's serious! Understanding the dark side of social media. *European Management Journal*, 36(4), 431-438.
- Kietzmann, J. H., Hermkens, K., McCarthy, I. P., & Silvestre, B. S. (2011). Social media? Get serious! Understanding the functional building blocks of social media. *Business Horizons*, 54(3), 241-251.
- Kietzmann, J. H., Lee, L., McCarthy, I. P., & Kietzmann, T. C. (forthcoming). Deepfakes: Trick or Treat? *Business Horizons*.