U-Business: The Next Wave of e-Business

It would be an understatement to say that the Internet has created frantic investment and hype over the last 10 years. Some characterized it as “Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds.” Although the honeymoon seems to be over for many e-businesses, there are no movements to abandon the new business models created by web-based commerce. Strategies are maturing, and it seems that a compromise between the online and physical world is likely to be effective; the usefulness of incorporating bricks with clicks emerged about a few years ago. Customer relationship and supply chain management serve to handle the input and output streams, and back end processes tie them together.

It seems that eBusiness is progressing into another stage as new more matured technologies emerge and new concepts and ideas follow. One of conspicuous trends is attention to so-called “ubiquitous computing.” This rather fuzzy concept inspires many new business models and ideas as well as diverse technologies while we do not have any clear ideas how this new set of technology affects business. On the other hand, eastern Asia now is the hot and dynamic focus of the world economy. China, Japan and Korea are becoming not only world factory but also a fertile cradle of new IT. The papers of this special issue reports this dynamic and hence rather seemingly ambiguous trend of the new phase of e-Business, especially observed from the eastern Asian region.

While E-Business enables more personalized services and marketing still providing personalized and customized one-to-one marketing remains economically and technically challenging. The study by JW Kim and H.J. Lee investigates the performance of collaborative filtering recommendation systems, which is widely used engine of personalized marketing effort especially when data for inference is sparse. Another paper by HJ Lee, JW Kim and SJ Park addresses even more extreme situation that no customer profile is available.
Electronic market places are also different from those of real space in many ways. One of the differentiating characteristics may be less friction in Cyberspace. E. Kim and B. Lee's work focuses on CRM strategies utilizing Words of Mouths in the digital market places while the study by DS Yeun, M. Chae and JY Kim suspects the effectiveness of Loss-Leader pricing strategy in online markets. Online market places produce unprecedented amount of data from online transactions. Especially online auction markets make those data available to everybody who has little technically programming skills to parse the data of interest from their web pages. SY Shim and B. Lee advocates to utilize those data for pricing for new products.

Ever tightening and evolving supply chain is another conspicuous phenomenon by e-Business. M. Xie and J. Chen analytically investigate supply chain strategy especially when trading partners are bound to an integrated Multi-agent e-Business model. HY Park, Z. Lee and SI Lim report a rich case study on use of DSS supplier selection.


Hence, this volume of the journal presents papers diverse in topics of interest and research methodologies. This highlights the still evolving e-Business of which impact may be wider and deeper than we have expected.

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Guest Editor