

## **EI3-IC Overview**

### *The Initiative on Enterprise Inter- and Intra-Organisational Integration – International Consensus*

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**Abstract** The initiative is the third one aimed on building international consensus on enterprise integration. With the focus on virtual enterprises the aspects of enterprise engineering, knowledge management and business process modelling, interoperability of business processes and models and model representation were addresses in the workshops and results presented at the conference.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

This third international initiative had again the objective to increase both international consensus and public awareness on enterprise integration. Following the two previous initiatives in 1992 and 1997 (Goranson, 2002 Kosanke, 1997, Petrie, 1992), the focus of the third initiative was on Enterprise Inter- and Intra-Organisational Integration (EI3). This included the recognition of competitive benefits, as well as organisation and infrastructure implications. Drivers, barriers and enablers for electronic commerce in general and the virtual enterprise in particular, as well as potential benefits from the application of integration supporting information and communication technology have been addressed. Application areas include business-to-business, e-business, e-commerce, extended and virtual enterprises, and supply chains.

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The EI3-IC initiative has provided a basis for an international discourse on the subject of enterprise inter- and intra-organisational co-operation with emphasis on virtual enterprises and Business-to-Business type e-commerce. Inviting experts in the field has enabled pulling in insights and results from other projects hence enabling a consolidation of this fragmented know-how, and thereby contributing to an international consensus in the field. The community built during the EI3-IC initiative will continue as an international forum to further identify and eliminate barriers to utilisation of inter- and intra-organisational integration technology (Nell, Goranson, 2002).

## **2 RATIONALE**

Globalisation combined with the emergence of powerful information and communication technologies drive enterprises towards new forms of co-operation. Electronic commerce and virtual enterprises are a new way for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to unite forces, increase their competitiveness and meet today's market needs and jointly behave as one producer towards the customer. Up to now application of relevant ICT support has been hampered by a lack of business justification, by a plethora of seemingly conflicting solutions and confusing terminology (Kosanke, 2001), and by an insufficient understanding of the technology by the end-user community. These barriers inhibit, or at least delay, the use of relevant methods and tools in the industry, especially in small-to-medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

One of the main concerns in the required collaborations is the need for information on partner capabilities. Such information will also help to establish the much needed trust between the partners. Partner capabilities can best be described through relevant business processes and associated resources. Linking compatible processes into an overall business process would allow evaluating the collaboration prior to its real implementation.

## **3 METHODOLOGY AND ACTIVITIES**

The initiative on enterprise inter- and intra-organisational integration (EI3-IC) consists of two parts:

1. Four workshops with international experts reviewing and consolidating a set of issues in enterprise inter and intra-organisational integration.

2. The ICEIMT'02 (International Conference on Enterprise Integration and Modelling Technologies) that is aimed on state of the art overview and presentation of the workshop results.

A scientific committee (see below) guided and supported the initiative. It acted as advisory committee for reviewing workshop and conference agendas and papers and helped to identify the experts to be invited to the workshops.

The workshops have been organised with plenary sessions for all participants and a number of parallel working group sessions. The first plenary session held in all workshops provided time for the participants to present their own work as it relates to the predefined set of issues. This methodology has led again to very good results. It enables the members of the working group to have a common understanding of each other's position leading to much better focusing on the issues to be discussed.

During the first plenary session the experts will usually amend the set of predefined issues. Working groups have then worked on subsets of the issues of the particular workshop. Presentation of working group results and discussions of the topic with all working groups have been done during subsequent plenary sessions.

Papers on workshop results were prepared co-operatively by the working groups and presented at the ICEIMT'02 by a group member.

### **3.1 Workshops and Conference**

Four thematic workshops with international experts in the field have been organised. The workshop themes have been selected according to their importance for the management of business collaborations. The following workshops have been held:

- Workshop 1, Knowledge management in inter- and intra-organisation environments (EADS, Paris, France, 01-12-05/06)
- Workshop 2, Enterprise inter- and intra-organisation engineering and integration (Gintic, Singapore, 02-01-23/25)
- Workshop 3, Interoperability of business processes and enterprise models (NIST, Gaithersburg, MD, USA)
- Workshop 4, Common representation of enterprise models (IPK, Berlin, Germany, 02-02-20/22)

Workshop editorials are presented as part of the related sections in these proceedings.

The ICEIMT'02 was held at the Polytechnic University of Valencia, Spain, on 2002-04 24/26. It was structured following the themes of the workshops. In addition to an opening session with keynote papers, a special

session on international projects provided information on actual work done on an international level.

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

International consensus on the contents of enterprise intra- and inter-organisation integration is a prerequisite for real industry acceptance and application of the technology. A more common terminology is expected to be one result of the initiative. With its particular focus on e-commerce the third initiative identified major players in this field both in industry and academia and thereby has continued to build the community on enterprise integration. A community that will continue the drive for consensus beyond this initiative and towards a follow-on ICEIMT (Nell, Goranson, 2002).

However, significant efforts are still needed to gain awareness and acceptance in the industry. Large-scale demonstrations of pilot applications as well as professional training of potential users would be means to convince the user community of the benefits of the technology.

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