

Editorial 23/2

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Dear Readers of Electronic Markets,

In the last issue we discussed that the Internet has been enhanced with mobile devices which are about to outnumber the human population. While the infrastructure has become almost ubiquitous, other developments have occurred which make use of this availability. Among the prominent are Internet services, such as the World Wide Web (WWW), which has spurred a large number of innovations on the Web itself, such as electronic trading and social media platforms. Many of these web-based services have also become known under the notion of Cloud Computing. We recognize that the ubiquitous infrastructure of the Internet has been the fertilizer of the WWW infrastructure which in turn has become the platform of more user- and/or business-centric services and platforms. Today, we are not only experiencing the modification of key Internet technologies, which date back to the 1970s, in terms of bandwidth, security, and reliability, but also the interaction of at least three infrastructure technologies with more to be expected.

At the same time we experience that the entire digital evolution is still at an early stage. Although an increasing number of private and professional users are connected via various devices to the electronic world and most are able to access the WWW, the use to services has several shortcomings. Participation in social media platforms is as proprietary as the usage of most

cloud services, i.e. membership in Facebook and Twitter is as separated from each other as the use of most apps on end-user devices. In the professional or the business-to-business environment, companies are still reluctant to share their enterprise knowledge on so-called multi-tenant cloud services and are in an orientation phase to integrate social media potentials, such as sharing, co-creation, and close user interaction in their strategies. This opens a broad spectrum for research which – as with all fundamental innovations – needs to address opportunities as well threats.

We are happy to present you five research articles in this issue that contribute in their way to understanding aspects of future Internet usage. First, the special theme section on “Electronic Markets and the future Internet: From clouds to semantics” includes three pieces which focus on customer acquisition with social media and the adoption of cloud computing. Our guest editors Ricardo Colomo-Palacios, Pedro Soto-Acosta, T. Ramayah and Meir Russ will introduce them in detail in their preface and we are grateful for their effort in organizing this special theme. In the general research section one contribution presents a classification of shared services and another an assessment of the quality of mobile services.

The typology of shared services is authored by Suraya Miskon, Erwin Fieft, Wasana Bandara and Guy Gable and examines the different structural arrangements of shared services in the area of higher education. Using three dimensions of shared services, a total of eight structural types of shared services were identified which reach from an internal shared center to inter-organizational shared services. This contribution delivers a first approach to explain alternative organizational types for shared services. The second general research by Jun Zhuo, June Wei, Lai C. Liu, Kai S. Koong and Shengtao Miao investigates whether mobile services within the Chinese express industry were helpful in increasing service quality. Using a set of six determinants the authors measure the improvement in service quality and argue that

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businesses need to address all determinants alike to achieve a positive contribution to service quality.

Quality brings us to the final aspect of this editorial. Attached you will find a list of all reviewers that participated in reviewing a total of 148 submissions which underwent the process in 2012. We highly appreciate the commitment of all reviewers and would like to emphasize that their

valuable time is critical for attaining and improving the quality of Electronic Markets.

Best regards from Leipzig and St.Gallen

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