Groupware: User Experiences

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The first mention of group support systems occurred fifteen years ago at the HICSS Conference. Since then teams of researchers have pioneered developments in groupware that dramatically improved group processes. These innovations have been applied in hundreds of organizations, demonstrating the benefits of improved group performance. The technological advances gained through years of research and practical experiences are key to the improvement of group processes as we continue to move groupware forward. The following papers combine the latest advances in groupware technology with experiences in real world situations. We are fortunate to be able to use this platform to share insights gained from our experiences in organized settings with groupware.

The experience and applications discussed are varied and reflect experience gained throughout the world. The paper by Qureshi, Group Support for an International Agency Network, provides insight into the type of group support required for consultation and collaboration. The paper by Vreede, Participative Modelling for Understanding: Facilitating Organizational Change with GSS, describes the use of stakeholder groups in organizational change efforts. The findings are based upon an action research study conducted at the Amsterdam Municipal Police Force. The paper by Mejias, Lazeneo, Rico, Torres, Vogel and Shepherd reports on the experimental results between U.S. and Mexican groups using group support systems. The authors found significant differences in satisfaction and perceived participation equity. This is one of the first papers in the group support systems field to study the effect of culture on the process. The paper by Nunamaker, Briggs and Mittleman, Lessons from a Decade of Group Support Systems Research, reports the lessons learned from ten years of working with real groups in industry and government and from running hundreds of controlled experiments. The paper introduces TEAM theory as a concept for explaining the process that limits productivity.

The session will conclude with a discussion to summarize thoughts and conclusions.