Mobile commerce involves the use of mobile computing devices in carrying out different types of economic transactions or enabling them to take place over space and time. The m-commerce includes use of such technologies as SMS services over a number of carriers (GSM, IS95, CDMA, W-CDMA), Bluetooth applications, and also the integration of low level digital carriers to IP based services through WAP or Compact HTML like the Japanese I-Mode service. This integration is one of the fastest growing markets of E-business and it will involve the development and design of a host of new applications, services, business models and technological solutions. The theme is both topical and challenging, as the number of potential mobile terminal users is huge (1 billion users by 2002) and will be dispersed among various types of consumer categories. The change in enablers of electronic commerce from desktop computing to palm- and pocket based services poses unprecedented problems on the design of services, technologies, and underlying business models. The theme covers basic technologies of wireless commerce including terminals, standards, transaction models, middleware, or security; potential business models that are embedded and /or facilitated by those technologies, methods; and design approaches to develop m-commerce applications. We sought papers therefore for this minitrack among the following areas:

- technologies and solutions for m-commerce (transaction models, security, payment, terminals)
- Mobility enabled m-commerce services, such as location aware services, logistic coupling (fleet management), and travel services
- Business models for m-commerce
- Methods and design approaches for m-commerce application
- Community creation in m-commerce, virtual and volatile communities, portals and smartals
- Studies on business, cultural, and individual impacts of mobile applications - cases and experiences.

Overall we were able to solicit five interesting papers that handle different aspects of this emerging research theme. We have two technology papers, two experience based reports of developing e-commerce applications, and one paper which discusses the impact of mobile commerce on marketing models and strategies (business models).

The paper by U. Varshney and Ron Vetter “Mobile Commerce: Framework, Applications and Networking Support” provides a general overview of m-commerce technologies, its business potential and likely impacts on the business. They also develop a categorization of future business applications in mobile commerce. The article by J. Tang, J. Veijalainen “Using agents to Improve Security and to Assist in Negotiations for E-Commerce Transactions in Mobile Computing” analyzes problems in handling complicated business transactions over mobile applications and logical properties of transaction models that must be recognized in order to guarantee “fault free” economic exchange. They also observe how agent technologies could be used to alleviate problems related to m-commerce applications. The experience report of D. Olsson, A. Nilsson “MEP – A Platform for Augmenting Audience Experience” provides an interesting experience report of developing “event” related virtual communities that can utilize several different channels of communication (radio, wireless services, phone) for an audience following this complicated event. Many times such an event can take place over long distances. The business potential of such services is also large as many of such events are followed over half a million spectators. The article by C. Colafigli, P. Inverardi and R. Matricciani “InfoParco: an experience in designing an information system accessible through WEB, WAP and IVR interfaces” discusses experiences of using several different access platforms in obtaining information services in the local government. Finally the paper by P. K. Kannan, Ai-Mei Chang, A. B. Whinston “Wireless Commerce: Marketing Issues and Possibilities” develops a set of propositions of how customer behavior and consumer markets will change due to the availability of anytime, anyplace services with low cost. Their propositions suggest that the impact of wireless services on market behavior and strategies will be deep and pervasive.

The inclusion of these papers in HICSS minitrack shows where the research is moving in this important and emerging field. It is very likely that this theme will remain a hot “topic” in years to come in many conferences as can be seen already in the interesting and insightful research results reported in the included papers.