

ERP Issues and Answers: Session Overview
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This is the third year at HICSS where there is a session devoted to ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) systems research. The two papers selected (out of 7 abstracts and 6 fully submitted papers) address implementation issues from 2 different perspectives; that of CSF (Critical Success Factors) and User Satisfaction. Since the ERP systems market continues to grow and is expected to top 20 billion U.S. dollars by 2002 [Gartner 1999], implementations are beginning to mature. In fact, trends in EAI (Enterprise Application Integration) indicate that ERP is a necessary infrastructure component for any business participating in e-business activity.

The first paper, "ERP Critical Success Factors: An Exploratory of the Contextual Factors in Public Sector Institutions", focuses on the implementation of ERP within the UK's HEIs (Higher Education Institutions). The authors draw from the CSF literature to develop a list of tactical and strategic factors that are examined in a multi-case exploratory study. The in-depth study of 4 institutions examines factors related to 1) organizational culture, 2) political structures, 3) technological legacy experience, 4) communication mechanisms, and 5) relationship and knowledge management. The findings show that in addition to traditional CSFs, each of the factors above play a key role in defining success for HEIs implementing an ERP system.

The second paper, "An Examination of ERP User Satisfaction in Taiwan", surveys end-users and key users (power users) in various industries

using ERP systems in Taiwan. The 2 instruments, that had been refined and validated in prior research, are used to collect user characteristics and 7-point bipolar ratings for various dimensions of user satisfaction and participation. Some of the user characteristics include age, education, etc. and the primary system variables centered on source of the system (foreign or domestic) for both software and consultants. Based on past research a number of hypotheses are developed and tested via an analysis of the survey data. Results show high levels of user satisfaction related to different user characteristics for end-users versus key users. In addition, foreign ERP systems received higher levels of satisfaction compared to domestic packages. The authors attribute this success to more sophisticated software and consultants from foreign products.

While both papers address implementation satisfaction, the first paper comes at the issue from the perspective of Critical Success Factors and the other looks at user and system characteristics. Each contributes more knowledge about what makes an ERP implementation successful and gives additional guidance to ERP project teams for things to address prior to the implementation process. These papers should provide for an interesting discussion of implementation issues and concerns.