Collaboration support for Integrated Modeling and Simulation

Jaco Appelman  
Delft University of Technology  
Netherlands  
j.appelman@tpm.tudelft.nl

Mariëlle den Hengst  
Delft University of Technology  
Netherlands  
m.den.hengst@tpm.tudelft.nl

Vlatka Hlupic  
University of Westminster  
United Kingdom  
v.hlupic-vidjak@westminster.ac.uk

Alan Serrano  
Brunel University  
United Kingdom  
alan.edwin.serranorico@brunel.ac.uk

Research shows that modeling has brought a large number of benefits to the organization, such as enhancing communication amongst stakeholders, aiding problem understanding, and assessing different design solutions. The synergies that exists across different organizational domains, though, has shifted the way models were designed from modeling a single domain area to a more integrated modeling view. The knowledge on how to support the collaborative production of models, however, is scattered across different domains and lacks a common frame of reference or idiom. The minitrack of Collaboration support for Integrated Modeling and Simulation aims to provide a forum to discuss facilitation techniques, process designs and tool support for the collaborative design and integration of models at different organizational levels.

This year the minitrack is composed of 4 papers covering two main topics of the minitrack: Tools and techniques for integrated collaboration modeling and issues regarding the stakeholders involved in the collaboration process. The first two papers tackle the topic related to tools and techniques. For instance, Thomas and Scheer in their paper argue that despite the benefits that reference models may bring to the organizations, their use in the field of business engineering is not spread. The authors argue that one factor that contributes to this problem is the lack of appropriate tools for the management of reference models. The article, thus, analyses this problem and presents an integrative tool to support the management of reference models.

In the second presentation De Cesare and Serrano look at alternative modeling approaches to enhance collaboration between business process (BP) and Information Systems (IS) modelers. They propose a modeling framework that maps the constructs used in IS models to those used in BP models so that both groups consider their organizational views in their designs. They argue that by sharing the information between BP and IS models, contributes to foster collaboration between analysts in both domains and thus to produced more integrated solutions.

The following two papers aimed at the problems and issues that stakeholders encounter when working in collaborative environments. In the third presentation, thus, Patel et al investigate senior development/project managers perceptions related to agile development, a facet of software development attracting increasing interest. They collected data from 62 organizations to investigate perceptions related to (a) belief in agile values and principles, and (b) value of agile principles within current development and organizational practice. One of the main findings of their research suggest that agile values and principles relate to communication and collaboration, and team involvement are perceived as important and are being practiced widely.

In the last presentation Ezz and Papazafeiropoulou look at the importance of collaboration between the stakeholders involved in E-government projects, specifically in Egypt. The authors argue that one of the challenges related to egovernment adoption is the lack of standard collaboration practices between the stakeholders, in their case, government agencies. In their research the authors identify a number of problems related to collaboration process, such as tracking and documenting decision making processes across the different government agencies involved. To this end, the paper propose a framework for effective inter-governmental collaboration, for Egypt and for e-government adoption in general.

The four papers in the minitrack provide new insights into the field of collaboration for integrated modeling. On one hand they provide new approaches and tools to enhance the collaboration process and on the other they provide more insights to the problems encountered when dealing with collaboration. We commend the papers to your reading.