

▼ Introduction to Business Processes Management Minitrack

Olivera Marjanovic
University of Sydney
o.marjanovic@econ.usyd.edu.au

In order to remain competitive, organizations are starting to organize their work around customer-centered business processes (BP), rather than isolated functions. From the initial focus on technologies for BP automation, over the last two decades, Business Process Management (BPM) has matured into a new business discipline. Compared to its predecessors such as Business Process Reengineering (BPR) and Total Quality Management (TQM), BPM represents a fundamental change in thinking and organizational practice that focuses on business value creation via continuous BP improvement and innovation supported by BPM-enabling technology.

While the wide-spread understanding of BPM as process automation technology will linger for some time, business leaders are now taking a new holistic approach to BPM, recognizing that non-technical aspects of BPM are as important as the underlying technology.

This inaugural *Business Process Management* minitrack adopts the same holistic view of BPM. It aims to explore the emerging issues, ideas, challenges and solutions created at the crossroads of various BPM aspects including strategy, people, business processes and technical systems. Thus, the selected papers deal with different aspects of BPM including BP improvement, BP outsourcing, BP-related risk management, conceptual modelling and design of flexible BPM systems.

The first group of papers focuses on BP innovation. The paper written by *zur Muehlen and Ho* describes the authors' experience in using the Business Process Modelling Notation during a process analysis and redesign project in a truck dealership. In addition to an empirical case study, the paper offers some very interesting insights into knowledge sharing processes, enabled by BPMN models in this particular organization. The second paper by *Marjanovic and Seethamraju* also deals with BP improvement in a large multi-unit organization, but from a very different perspective. The authors focus on the improvement process as an example of a knowledge-intensive BP. By exploring the knowledge dimension of BPs, especially in the context of practice-oriented BPs, the authors aim to

extend the current boundaries of BPM field beyond transactional BPs.

The second group of papers deals with a very challenging topic of BP Outsourcing (BPO). The paper by *Martin et al.* focuses on the critical success factors of BPO placing them within the context of BPM. The authors argue that process readiness, IT readiness and business management readiness are important indicators of organizational readiness for BPO. Also in the same group, the paper by *Mattig* focuses on the role of governance in BPO. Based on the evidence obtained from a very extensive case study of BPO practice in the Swiss retail banking sector, this paper challenges a commonly held view that the mode of governance determines outsourcing success.

The third group of papers deals with the technical aspects of BPM including conceptual modelling and design of more flexible BPM systems. The paper by *Eikebrokk et. al.* describes a conceptual model of process modelling practice. The proposed model was created on the basis of the existing literature and then validated in an extensive study of 34 process-modelling projects in Norway. The authors used a combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis and obtained some interesting results.

The topic of risk management and its possible integration with the BPM field has been investigated by *Goluch et al.* This multidisciplinary paper offers a unifying method designed to enable modeling and implementation of risk-aware business process.

The final two papers deal with a challenging problem of flexible BPM support. The paper by *Nurcan* offers a survey of BP flexibility requirements and the existing BPM systems designed to support various aspects of flexible BPs. The paper also put forward a set of criteria for comparison of different flexible BPM systems. Finally, the paper by *Alexopoulou et al.* focuses on on-the-fly composition of BPs based on an event-based approach.

The inaugural Business Process Management minitrack aims to provide a forum for idea exchange between researchers, academics and practitioners in this emerging field. We hope that you enjoy the selected papers and the discussion they generate.