MINITRACK CHAIR’S INTRODUCTION
Moving the Organization to Convergent Technologies:
e-Business and Wireless

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The papers in this minitrack focus around the strategic uses of convergent technologies that clearly dictate the need for organizational readiness. e-Business models, strategic partnership alliances, technology-focused solutions, staffing, and methodologies are all part of an evolving organizational model needed to capitalize on fast moving information technologies. Emerging technologies are rolling in as "waves" and it is important to predict new technology waves as well as to anticipate organizational changes around the advantageous opportunities created by these waves.

Research needs to be developed in the areas that foster (1) e-business organizational models, (2) identifying key technologies, (3) fostering partnerships in the e-business space, (4) implementing e-builder methodologies, (5) garnering e-business functionality, (6) building organizational staff for the e-business space, (7) managing the investment value of convergent technologies, (8) integrating corporate infrastructure with back-office technologies, (9) generating new e-business marketing initiatives, (10) developing broadband and wireless technology solutions, (11) building TV and wireless product sets into corporate performance measures, and (12) predicting industry convergence of technologies integrated into liquid content.

The first paper entitled “Mobile Agent to User Interaction” by Mihailescu, Gamage, and Kendall offers a discussion of mobile, wireless hand-held devices where e-commerce applications can offer multi-platform development opportunities. The framework for development deals with keeping track of mobile agents and mobile users and evolving the application’s functionality and appearance. The research identifies the factors affecting the type of user interaction. The MAUI framework offers a solid infrastructure for allowing mobile agents to generate customized user interfaces dynamically.
The second paper entitled “Understanding the Personal Competencies of IS Support Experts: Moving Toward the e-Business Future” by Nelson, Nelson, and Ghods studies the personal competencies required of IS support personnel to succeed in a non-development oriented IS organization. Two different types of organizations are compared: large, brick and mortar organizations and those moving to the web more quickly. The findings indicate that the personal competencies of these organizations are quite different using causal mapping. This paper was nominated for the best paper award.

The third paper entitled “The Human Face of Electronic Business: From Component Supplier to Strategic Business Partner Through IT-Supported Networks” by Wennberg and Ronnback discuss the move toward partnering and relationship management due to the e-business practices. This research explores the web-based communication platform that facilitates the integration between companies within a business network with the objective to increase communication internally and externally in order to gain competitive advantages in the marketplace. The need to enhance the partnering relationships within the organization was found to be the differentiation factor.

The fourth paper entitled “Exploring Mobile eCommerce in Geographical Bound Retailing” by Eklund and Pessi explores how mobile e-commerce services map to customer requirements in geographical bound retailing using a WineGuide application adapted to mobile phones. The findings of this study indicate that the full potential of mobile e-commerce services can be established through a complete e-commerce transaction implementation via the mobile phone that links with the remote controller. The researchers offer consideration around emerging WAP technologies around consumer value.