

Call for Papers

Long Range Planning

Special Issue: Social Software: Strategy, technology, and community

Guest editors

Dominique Foray, EPFL, Switzerland
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Submission deadline for extended abstracts
(or *clear* expressions of interest):
July 31, 2009

Submission deadline for full papers:
November 30, 2009

New generations of Internet applications and services build on active social networks, feature personalized content, and offer the ability to exchange data and media with other users. Tim O'Reilly coined the term Web 2.0 for the phenomenon. A range of new business models aim at innovation and knowledge creation with users. Companies such as Facebook created an Internet platform that allows millions of users to interact and exchange personal content; Threadless enables their community to design and evaluate T-shirt designs which the company then produces and sells; Last.fm and Blip.fm encourage listeners to create and share music playlists and help match their preferences in order to play music that is more likely to fit individual taste; Amazon solicits book reviews from online customers and asks readers to evaluate the reviews to approximate quality ratings; YouTube, Flickr, and other sites allow public comments and rating systems as well as individual content channels; many more applications of social software hit the net every day.

Social software refers to the technologies and services that facilitate and democratize computer-mediated communication between individuals and groups. This special issue seeks to unite organization-, strategy-, and innovation scholars who study the nature and impact of social software on business. The new phenomenon challenges existing theories and generates questions for business organizations and micro practices.

We wish to inspire scholars with an interest in topics such as innovation, information systems, social networks, organizational design, or knowledge management to consider submitting their work to this special issue. We welcome both theoretical work and empirical research using quantitative or qualitative methods. All articles should demonstrate relevance to the understanding of social software and its implications for business and innovation. The audience of LRP includes both well read academics as

well as senior executives with the equivalent of a good MBA. Hence, readers of this special issue are technically savvy, scientifically demanding, and drawn to practically relevant phenomena.

From an open-ended list of possible topics, we offer a small sample of research questions appropriate for this special issue:

- What are business opportunities that take advantage of social software? What predicts successful **strategic positioning** in the new space of social software?
- Heterogeneous needs among users create demand for specialized products and services. What are the characteristics of **business models** that successfully leverage social software for mass-customization, product, or service innovation?
- Social software applications allow the aggregation of consumer and user ratings, feedback, and the creation of new ideas. What are **knowledge systems** for generating, selecting, filtering, and learning from user feedback? How can organizations appropriate returns based on content generated by external actors?
- Do **innovation processes** that emerge from networks of actors or communities differ from the processes inside traditional organizational boundaries? What are the consequences of networks of innovation for platform and standard evolution?
- Industry incumbents protect their markets by erecting **entry barriers**. Networks building on social software infrastructure may undercut entry barriers by utilizing the Internet for one or more activities in the value chain. What are successful new strategies that enable firms to enter industries?
- Revealing information, knowledge, and technology to peers and competitors can be a promising strategy in order to sustain **knowledge exchange** and motivate external experts to contribute their know-how and time. However, the presence of for-profit firms can crowd-out volunteer participation. How can collaboration and the social interaction of communities of volunteers and firms be initiated and sustained?
- Web 2.0 platforms and services democratize publishing, multi-media production and other creative endeavors. What are the **institutional innovations** that social software enables? What are strategic implications for public institutions and NGOs?
- Entrepreneurs embrace **new technologies** in search of opportunities in existing and new markets. Which social software applications best enable new innovation practices? What are the technologies that allow entrepreneurs to successfully experiment with social software?

Authors should submit an extended abstract or a clear expression of interest to the guest editors by July 31, 2009. All abstracts will receive a first screening and feedback by the guest editors who will encourage authors of promising abstracts to submit full manuscripts before November 30, 2009 to both the guest editors and to the editorial office of LRP.

The manuscripts prepared according to LRP's guidelines for authors will be reviewed in a double-blind review process. The review process adheres to a very ambitious schedule that aims at providing quick feedback to the authors and allows for two rounds of revisions on the manuscripts. The final manuscripts will be published online as early as November 2010. The anticipated publication date of the special issue is 2011. In June 2010 a workshop is planned at ETH Zurich to provide feedback on revised manuscripts.

Submit **extended abstracts by July 31, 2009** to: Stefan Haefliger, ETH MTEC, Kreuzplatz 5, 8032 Zurich, Switzerland, Tel +41 44 632 8776, Email: shaefliger@ethz.ch

Submit **full manuscripts** with suggestions for possible referees to the online submission system of LRP **before November 30, 2009**:

<http://ees.elsevier.com/lrp/default.asp>

For questions contact either:

- ✓ Stefan Haefliger, ETH MTEC, Kreuzplatz 5, 8032 Zurich, Switzerland, Tel +41 44 632 8776, Email: shaefliger@ethz.ch
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Editors' biographies

Dominique Foray

Dominique Foray is Professeur Ordinaire at the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) and holds the Chair of Economics and Management of Innovation (CEMI). He also serves as a Director at the College of Management of Technology, EPFL. He is currently chairman of the expert group "Knowledge for Growth"; a group of prominent economists created to advise J.Potocnik (Member of the European Commission). He is also a member of the national Research Council (Switzerland).

D. Foray develops his research in the following academic areas: Applied economics (technological change, intellectual property rights, innovation and knowledge), management of technology, and economic policy for the new (knowledge-based) economy. He has recently published "The economics of knowledge" at MIT Press, paper edition, 2006. D. Foray's research interests include all topics and issues related to the economics and management of technology, knowledge and innovation at both the micro and macro levels. This broad field covers the economics of science and technology with a particular focus on high tech sectors, the management of large-scale technological projects, international comparisons of institutions, and systems of innovation within the context of the new economy. Intellectual property and competition policies, information technology and the new economy, capital market and entrepreneurship, national systems of innovation are fields of high relevance in his research.

Georg von Krogh

Georg von Krogh is Professor of Strategic Management and Innovation at the ETH Zurich's Department of Management, Technology, and Economics. He is also head of this department. Georg received his MSc from the Norwegian University of Technology and Natural Science, and a Ph.D. from this University's Department of Industrial Economics and Technology Management. He has been Assistant Professor of Business Policy at SDA Bocconi, Bocconi University in Italy, Associate Professor of Strategy at the Norwegian School of Management, and Professor of Management at the University of St.Gallen in Switzerland, and a Director of this University's Institute of Management. He has been Visiting Professor at MIT's Sloan School of Management, Hitotsubashi University in Japan, Japan Advanced Institute of Science and Technology, and the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Georg has published on strategic management, knowledge creation, open source software, innovation, as well as organization and management theory, in journals such as the California Management Review, Information Research, Harvard Business Review, Management Science, Organization Science, Research Policy, and Strategic Management Journal. He has edited special issues for European Management Journal, International Business Review, Management Science, and Research Policy. He is a Senior Editor of Organization Studies, and an Editorial Board member of various journals.

Stefan Haefliger

Stefan Haefliger works as a researcher and lecturer at ETH Zurich. His research and teaching focuses on user innovation and knowledge reuse in innovation processes. Since 2007, he's been conducting extensive research on Web-based entertainment companies and was invited by the European Commission's Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS) to lecture on social computing and innovation models. His research has appeared in Management Science, Harvard Business Review, and Information Research. Stefan is an associate editor of Long Range Planning.

Eric Monteiro

Eric Monteiro is professor of information systems at the Dept. of Computer and Information science at the Norwegian Univ. of Science and Technology. He also holds an adjunct professorship at the Univ. of Oslo, Norway.

Eric's work addresses broadly the socio-technical uptake of information systems. He has more specifically looked at issues of collaboration, knowledge sharing and conflict in and around the development and use of ICT. His work cover the implied processes of learning that go into the successful use of collaborative ICT. In his work, Eric has studied large-scale implementation efforts both in private business organisations as well as in the public sector.

Eric sits on the editorial board of a number of journals including Information Systems Research, The Information Society and Journal of the AIS. He has published his work in outlets such as MIS Quarterly, Information and Organization, Computer-supported cooperative work and The Information Society.