Building Sustainable Information Systems

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Building Sustainable Information Systems

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Preface

Information Systems (IS) as a discipline draws on diverse domains including, technology, organisational theory, management and social science. The field is recognized as very broad and encompassing many themes and areas. However, the development of technologically based artefacts, or information systems development (ISD), in the broadest sense, is a central concern of the discipline. Significantly, IS impacts on the organisational and societal contexts in the way the IS is deployed and consequently this impact presents evolving challenges for ISD.

Today, there is universal agreement that human behaviour has led to significant degradation of the natural environment on a global scale. This is now one of the most critical challenges confronting the world. ICT is widely recognised as one means to address this challenge, and IS can make a significant contribution as it combines the social with the technical aspects of systems. Thus the impact of ISD needs to be considered and evaluated not only in terms of its impact on the work environment but also on its effect in the broader natural and built environments as well as its social impact.

Sustainable IS is an emerging theme in academic research and industry practice in response to a variety of factors. These include recognition of the role ICT and IS can play in mitigation and adaptation strategies to address global environmental degradation and, paradoxically, how to deal with the direct contribution of ICT to that degradation, within the context of embryonic regulatory environments being enacted globally.

The ISD conference is dedicated to IS development and compliments the international network of general IS conferences (ICIS, ECIS, AMCIS, PACIS, ACIS). The development of information systems has paralleled technological developments and the deployment of those technologies in all areas of society, including government, industry, community and in the home. As a practice-based discipline, ISD has always promoted a close interaction between theory and practice that has set an agenda that is focused on the integration of people, processes and technology within a specific context.

This is the second occasion that Monash University has hosted the ISD conference. On the first occasion in 2003, the Faculty of Information Technology provided

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funding to invite to Melbourne members of the first Polish-Scandinavian ISD Seminar that was the forerunner of the International Conference on Information Systems Development, the ISD conference. This year a member of the original ISD Seminar, Professor Karlheinz Kautz, was a keynote speaker.

In this volume we bring together current research around the development of Sustainable IS, expressed in the theme of the 21st ISD Conference, "Building Sustainable Information Systems". The conference, held at the Monash University Prato Centre, in Tuscany, Italy, included diverse research that examined ISD from the perspective of sustainability. Keynote addresses were an important component as they reinforced and interpreted the conference theme. The two keynotes addresses were presented by Professor Doug Vogel, who spoke on Sustaining IS as a Discipline, and Professor Karlheinz Kautz, who addressed the issue of Managing Sustainable Information Systems Development—Culture, Balance and Mindfulness.

Sustainable IS, or "Green IS", is a catch-all term used to describe the development, construction, management, use and disposal of IS, and the ICT that underpins it, in a way that minimizes its impact on the environment. As a result, the term has many different meanings as was reflected in the conference tracks that included:

- The changing landscape of information systems: properties of a new IS ecology
- Methodologies for design within complex environments
- Green IS—information systems for sustainability
- · Model-driven engineering in ISD
- · Sustainable ISD project management
- · Sustainable knowledge management

All submitted papers were double-blind reviewed by at least two reviewers, and the quality and fairness of the reviews attest to the quality of conference and the accepted papers. As is usual for ISD, conference delegates came from many countries and institutions and this contributed to the particular social aspect of the ISD conference that is its hallmark; collegiality and friendliness.

The success of any conference is dependent on many factors. First, we would like to extend our gratitude to the work of the track chairs, all the authors, the reviewers and delegates who attended the conference. Second, we would like to acknowledge and thank the work of those behind the scenes. In particular we thank Sanaz Bayati who worked tirelessly on all aspects of the organisation of the conference. We would also like to thank the staff of the Monash Prato Centre for their support in ensuring the smooth running of the conference. Last, we acknowledge the role of the International Steering Committee for their guidance and moral support.

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Green IS—Information Systems for Sustainability

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