

# Preface

## Enterprise Information Systems

This book identifies key areas of learning about enterprise transformations using Information Systems. To develop these learning the author takes two approaches: review the literature on contemporary business transformation practices and review several detailed case studies. The research methodology used for this book is a combination of Bardhan, Krishnan and Lin (2013), Lucas et al. (2013) and Yin (2003). The methodology was used to understand the current state of the literature and bring new insights from cases of enterprise information systems in organizations (Romanow, Cho & Straub, 2012). This combination of the literature and lessons learned from the cases is integrated to develop an emerging theory for enterprise information systems studies (Kotnour, 2011; Podsakoff et al., 2003)

This book is intended for those with little or no knowledge of EIS. It might be particularly appropriate for many types of courses taught at the top end of undergraduate (junior and senior years) or postgraduate (e.g., MBA, MSc in IS) level. Based on the discretion of the teachers and objectives of the students, stress—or the lack of—might be placed on specific parts of this book.

Materials in this book have been divided into three parts:

1. Overview of EIS
2. Analysis of EIS
3. EIS Case Studies

## Part I: Overview of Enterprise Information Systems

Here contains a set of actions managers can use to implement EIS, as well as frameworks (i.e., models of variables and research questions) for academics to understand and conduct further research on EIS. The management actions and research framework are built from reviewing the existing literature on enterprise systems and lessons learned from the author's experiences both in industry and researching various EIS cases. The research framework identifies the importance of focusing on EIS alignment approach with the transformation needs and internal context of different organizations. In various sections of PART I in this book, specific questions would be offered to students for further research. Business managers can use this section of the book to understand the issues they need to focus on during implementation of EIS projects. This section also helps researchers to identify potential research paths on transforming organizations through EIS implementation.

Chapter 1 begins by introducing EIS and briefly describing previous attempts to integrate IS in support of organization goals. This chapter also summarizes EIS components and describes various management styles. It ends with the different visions of EIS noticed over the years.

In Chapter 2 the author explains different patterns in previously implemented EIS and demonstrates the practical implications of implementing EIS and its reflections on the entire business involving organizational processes, culture and politics. The chapter also details several challenges to EIS implementations within a business environment.

Chapter 3 begins with a precise definition of EIS outsourcing—as the act of transferring some of an organization's recurring internal EIS activities and decision rights to outside providers, as set forth in a contract—this book deserves some attention from those wishing to take a major step in the area of EIS. It presents a very lucid methodology for EIS outsourcing. The concepts

outlined are easy to follow, and though the reader is not given incredibly detailed information about a specific case of EIS outsourcing, the book will definitely serve as a reference to anyone needing a structured general approach to EIS outsourcing. Those who have got their feet wet will vouch for the fact that EIS outsourcing can be a complex, controversial and sometimes painful practice. The chapter also defines the correct approach and implementation for EIS outsourcing, and something as important as the setting up—how to proceed and handle issues, once it is in place. Besides, one major difference between this book and the many others on the subject of EIS, is that it tries to be all-embracing, providing business examples from varied fields, unlike others which are IT-centric.

## Part II: EIS Analysis

This section of the book contains 5 chapters that analyses the various processes and results from EIS implementation. It begins with Chapter 4, which explains that all managers for reputable businesses today are faced with the need to implement and manage EIS. While some develop EIS strategy from a position of strength (see cases in Part III) others need to overcome significant problems. This chapter looks at the need to review EIS in various types of businesses, why they are important, how much role they play in the achieving the business's goals and some of the tools and techniques that managers can use to implement and manage EIS.

Chapter 5 details the need to analyze EIS resources and capacity in a particular business to fully understand whether the resources and competencies fit the environment in which the manager is operating, and the opportunities and threats which exist. Understanding EIS's capacity may also be the lead-edge of EIS developments in the sense that new opportunities may exist by exploiting the business's unique resources and competences in ways which competitors find difficult to match.

That is followed by Chapter 6 where the reader is taken through a major challenge for all managers today in helping develop a business which is simultaneously able to meet stakeholder expectations while building capabilities and competences which provide bases of internal efficiency, as well as meeting the needs of customers better than competitors within a changing environment. This chapter explains how EIS can meet this demanding challenge which cannot be done by the intellectual understanding or the sheer energy of an isolated good manager.

Chapter 7 deals with the process of obtaining EIS value as they are to be found in business today—it is therefore descriptive rather than prescriptive. It expresses the importance of understanding the reality of EIS implementation in businesses, not least because managers who seek to influence the outcome of EIS must do so within such realities. Moreover, it is this book's intention that EIS be approached in such a way that it builds upon an understanding of that reality.

In Chapter 8 the author expresses the need to re-think accounting in terms of Enterprise Information Systems. Though most of my colleagues—in a very prestigious feeling for accountancy—would find this a controversial view of accounting that our less systems-inclined colleagues might dispute, the profession has for some time reported on the emerging technologies reshaping accounting practice (Greenstein & McKee, 2004). The reader is introduced to 21st century accountancy requirement of the ability to approach Enterprise Information Systems with the confidence and knowledge to search through the voluminous data and analyze the key portions that explain an entity's financial condition and operations performance.

## Part III: EIS Implementation

Contains two chapters that both detail Case Studies sharing experiences and challenges for EIS implementation in real life situations.

Chapter 9 is a real life Case of Enterprise Information from Industry, demonstrating the extent to which managers see their EIS developing essentially on the basis of a finely tuned responsiveness to changes in specific business environments. In this case EIS is a tool to the extent to which a manager sees himself/herself leading change on the basis of his/her particular competences. This case emphasizes EIS implementation in Europe which are mostly completed by outsourcing companies working in the business of IS providers. The chapter provides an overview of enterprise information system outsourcing—namely issues surrounding contracts, management strategies, management implications, service level, product or service warranty, transfer of assets, staff

engagement and termination, pricing and payment, intellectual property, company liability, information security and dispute resolution.

Similarly Chapter 10 is a real life Case Study from an Elderly Care Institution in Europe which also demonstrates the extent to which managers see their EIS developing essentially on the basis of a finely tuned responsiveness to changes in their business environmental. In this case EIS is a tool to the extent to which a manager sees himself/herself leading change on the basis of his/her particular competences.

This section ends with the book's conclusion in Chapter 11, giving advantages and disadvantages of Enterprise Information Systems as seen in the text through the previous chapters.

Readers should expect to learn new terminology along with frameworks, modern decision-making tools and other important elements of the EIS context. This information is be drawn from a number of different business situations and arrangements in organizations—because EIS needs many insights from different business environments to improve the world of business in this age of technology.

With these preliminaries out of the way, let's begin by having a general overview of EIS as it is perceived in the business world today.

## References

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