

Editor's Introduction

Service Science Research

In 2004, IBM launched the campaign to promote service science, management, and engineering (SSME) because the company found the revenue from services exceeded that from computing machine manufacturing. The main goal of SSME is to improve the quality of technology-enabled service systems by applying scientific, management, and engineering knowledge to make the performance of service more predictable. In fact, this can be seen as a general trend when more and more companies outsource their manufacturing processes to China and India. Similar cases such as Otis also have successfully shifted their core business from manufacturing to services. Service enhancement and co-production are clearly new trends in the near future. As most new services are IT-enabled or IT-embedded, service science is also a fertile ground for IS research.

SSME is a multi-disciplinary domain. It may cover computer science, information systems, psychology, marketing, human behavior, operations management, economics, and several other related areas. Our discipline can contribute from both design science and behavioral science perspectives. In design science, how can IT be used innovatively to design new services is a challenging issue. The wide-spread of personalized services on the Internet is an example of new service design. Design of new service process in which IT can perform a core role is another potential issue of research. The evolution toward web services and cloud computing also shows the trend in service-oriented information systems design. New design will drive new usage behavior (and vice versa). From the behavior and management perspective, information systems research can help better understand the “how” and “why” new services are used and managed effectively.

In this issue, Hong-Mei Chen, Harry Wang, and Leon Zhao have put together a set of papers that cover a few selected issues related to service research. I appreciate their effort in soliciting and organizing the review of these representative papers in this new and promising area.

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