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Overcoming the legacy effect in public sector information infrastructures – rational choice and institutional theory perspectives

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to explain how the constraints of legacy interorganizational information infrastructures (IOII) can be overcome by using the bootstrapping and adaptiveness design principles proposed by Hanseth and Lyytinen. Information systems are no longer typically implemented in a vacuum as standalone applications and inertia effects from an existing installed base can increase based upon additional components and interactions. Overcoming this inertia can be effectively achieved by designing with bootstrapping and adaptiveness in mind. The theoretical perspectives used for this study to describe the organization and environment are rational choice and institutional theory. A conceptual framework is offered based upon a review prior research and then validated through a case study of a public sector interagency IOII. This study contributes to II research by specifying antecedent conditions leading to inertia in the installed based, and by highlighting the critical role of positive network effects in overcoming legacy constraints.

Keywords (Required)

Interorganizational systems, information infrastructure, legacy systems, rational choice, institutional theory, public sector, case study.