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Foreword

This book aims to improve the understanding of trends and challenges in digital business innovation at the European as well as at the global level. It helps create a connection between business readers and academic research. The book summarizes what is hot—each year—in digital business, but with a focus on showing something new to professionals from an academic perspective. In this book, Vincenzo has put together several topics, clustering them in three Parts that could be seen as the steps of a roadmap. The book focuses first on the main digital systems' trends (Part I), trying to examine technological issues such as Big Data, Cloud Computing, Mobile services, etc., from a managerial perspective, aiming to reach a wide spectrum of executives, including those without an IT background. These last two Chapters shift the perspective of Part I, introducing the reader to Part II, which analyses and discusses the managerial challenges of technological trends focusing on governance models, the transformation of work and collaboration as a consequence of the digitization of the work environment, and finally dealing with what may be considered the real challenge to digital business: how to manage, control, and exploit a company's identity and brand in a competitive digital environment. Part II frames the managerial challenges so that they can complement the IT manager's perspective, while providing a useful summary of the state of the art for other non-IT executives. Part III discusses how companies have carried out “innovation in practice”, providing easy to read and structured forms on what were some of the more interesting experiences at a global level in 2013. It is a challenge for any scholar to identify the most popular digital business topics in any given year. Given this, summarizing the vast literature in information systems, digital marketing, and computer science and identifying the most cutting edge phenomena is an arduous task. I congratulate Vincenzo for this book and look forward to seeing it in print soon.

Anindya Ghose

Preface

This book aims to discuss and present the main trends and challenges in Digital Business Innovation to a composite audience of practitioners and scholars. Accordingly, each considered topic will be analyzed in its technical and managerial aspects, also through the use of case studies and examples, the book having two main objectives:

- to review and discuss recent digital trends emerging from both managerial and scientific literature. Furthermore, the book aims to summarize, compare, and comment challenges and approaches to business digital transformation of organization, being a simple yet ready to consult scientific toolbox for both managers and scholars;
- to be the first of a yearly outlook focused on digital trends emerging from both the managerial and scientific literature, supporting organizations to identify and take advantage of digital business innovation and transformation, as well as its related opportunities.

As for the review objective, it is yet challenging to find a unified survey of current scientific work concerning relevant topics to digital business innovation, such as, for example, the different perspectives of Information Systems research (from management to computer science and engineering, among others). Furthermore, it is yet difficult to find such kind of unified survey acting as an instrument for providing practitioners a perspective on academic research, suitable to be used by them in their day-to-day activities or simply as an update on what academia may offer with regard to the industry proposals. Notwithstanding some journals such as, e.g., MIT Sloan Management Review, IEEE Computer, or the Communications of the ACM (CACM) have such a mission of connecting research and industry practices, at the best of the author knowledge they do not provide a yearly integrated summary or critical review, encompassing their respective areas (management, engineering, and computer science). However, these publications are going to be a part of the large set of information and body of knowledge together with other journals such as, e.g., Management of Information Systems Quarterly (MISQ), Communications of the Association for Information Systems, Management of Information Systems Quarterly Executive (MISQE), Information Systems Research, European Journal of Information

Systems, Journal of Information Technology, Information Systems Journal, and conferences such as International Conferences of Information Systems (ICIS), European Conferences of Information Systems (ECIS), America's Conferences of Information Systems (AMCIS) (just to mention some of the Management of Information Systems research sources), that this book aims to consider for identifying the challenges, ideas, and trends, that may represent "food for thoughts" to practitioners.

Notwithstanding the book adopts an academic approach as for sources collection and analysis, it is also concrete, describing problems from the viewpoints of managers, further adopting a clear and easy-to-understand language, in order to capture the interests of top managers as well as graduates students.

Taking these issues into account, this book is distinctive for its intention to synthesize, compare, and comment major challenges and approaches to business digital transformation of organization, being a simple yet ready to consult scientific toolbox for both managers and scholars. Finally, as said above, the book aims to be the first of a yearly outlook focused on digital trends emerging from both the managerial and scientific literature. In what follows an outline of the book is provided.

Outline of the Book

The book argument is developed along three main axes. In particular, Part I first considers *Digital Systems Trends* issues related to the growing relevance, on the one hand, of *Big Data*, *Cloud Computing*, and *Mobile Services* for business; on the other hand, it discusses the drivers and challenges of *Social Listening* and *IT Consumerization*, topics of strategic interest for IT and Marketing executives, in order to enable an effective understanding of today's organizations as well as users behavior and needs. Thus, in this part of the book the main technological trends, actually debated in both academia and industry, will be discussed and analyzed in their managerial challenges and opportunities. The trends have been selected also on the basis of focus groups and interviews to 80 European IT executives from different industries (finance, manufacturing, utilities, service, among others). Focusing on systems evolution trends from a technology push perspective, the analysis will move from information and service infrastructure topics such as *Big Data* and *Cloud Computing*, through *Mobile Services* as platforms for socializing and "touch points" for customer experience, to emerging paradigms that actually are transforming marketing, governance, and the boundaries of organizations as well as our own private life (i.e., *Social listening* and *IT Consumerization*).

Subsequently, the Part II of this book considers *Digital Management Trends*, focusing on work practices, identity/brand digital transformation, and governance. In this Part, the analysis will focus on the main managerial trends, actually answering and reacting to the systems' trends surveyed in Part I. Also in this case the selected topics result both from academia and industry state-of-the-art analyses

and from focus groups and interviews to 80 European IT Executives from different industries (finance, manufacturing, utilities, and service, among others), likewise. Focusing on management evolution trends, the argumentation adopts a management pull perspective to consider how *work and collaboration* may be reconfigured or adapted to the new digital opportunities and constraints emerging from social networks paradigms, such as, e.g., crowdsourcing and people services. Moreover, this part of the volume will explore the identity challenges for businesses both as security and privacy issues; digital identity will be discussed also as with regard to brand management in the actual digital ecosystems, and the consequent constant revision of value propositions and business models for rebranding a company digital business, due to strict time to market. Furthermore, the last Chapter of this part of the volume will discuss the governance defies raised by the previous-mentioned changes and reconfiguration of organizational resources and structure.

Finally, Part III will discuss first ([Chap. 9](#)) the underlying issues and the most relevant concepts for understanding Business Model Innovation, providing general insights on the state-of-the-art and basic constructs of this research stream, suitable to support an understanding of its evolution in current digital business innovation experiences and practices. Then, [Chap. 10](#) will present and review case studies of digital innovation trends at global level. Thus, the Chapter aims to discuss examples of digital innovation in practice, providing fact sheets suitable to build a “map” of the 10 most interesting digital innovations actually available worldwide. Besides an introduction to the factors considered in the choice of each innovation, a specific description of it will be developed. The considered 10 innovations will be discussed in their relationship to the topics of the previous Parts/Chapters, both providing insights on their potential evolution trends and unmatched characteristics, likewise. Finally, the conclusion will provide a summary of all arguments of the volume together with general managerial recommendations.

Vincenzo Morabito

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