

Preface

Enterprise information systems (EIS) have become increasingly popular over the last 15 years [1-2]. EIS integrate and support business processes across functional boundaries in a supply chain environment [3-5]. In recent years, more and more enterprises world-wide have adopted EIS such as Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) for running their businesses. Previously, information systems such as CAD, CAM, MRPII and CRM were widely used for partial functional integration within a business organization. With global operation, global supply chain, and fierce competition in place, there is a need for suitable EIS such as ERP, E-Business or E-Commerce systems to integrate extended enterprises in a supply chain environment with the objective of achieving efficiency, competency, and competitiveness. As an example, the global economy has forced business enterprises such as Dell and Microsoft to adopt ERP in order to take the advantage of strategic alliances within a global supply chain environment. Today, not only the large companies, but also the medium companies are quickly learning that a highly integrated EIS is more and more a required element of doing business. Businesses all over the world are investing billions of dollars in acquiring and implementing EIS in particular ERP systems by SAP and Oracle. As a result, there is a growing demand for researching EIS to provide insights into challenges, issues, and solutions related to the design, implementation and management of EIS.

There is no doubt that the topic of EIS is new, popular and having important long-term strategic impact on global business and world economy. Due to the importance of the subject, there is a significant amount of ongoing research in the area. To respond the market needs from both academic researchers and practitioners for communicating their research outcomes, and contribute to, and often lead, progresses in the state-of-knowledge and state-of-the-art in EIS, the First IFIP TC8 International Conference on Research and Practical Issues of Enterprise Information Systems (CONFENIS 2006) was held at Vienna, Austria, April 2006 (<http://www.confenis.org/?q=node>). Two months after, the International Forum of Information Systems Frontiers (IFISF) —Xian International Symposium, was held in June 29-30, Xian, China. This is the first international symposium on information systems frontiers that is sponsored by a major Chinese research institution and held in China. One of the main themes of this conference is Enterprise Information Systems. Due to the success of these two premier international conferences, the Second IFIP TC8.9 International Conference on Research and Practical Issues of Enterprise Information Systems (CONFENIS 2007) is to be held in Beijing, China, October 2007 (<http://www.keylab-imie.org/confenis2007/general/index.aspx>).

CONFENIS 2007 is a primary international event which provides an opportunity for EIS academicians and practitioners in the world to gather, exchange ideas, and present original research in their fields. The purpose of the conference is to report on the state-of-the-art of, and emerging trends in, research and practice in EIS. The conference called for original contributions on significant research findings, reflecting advanced technological

research and applications in the field, and state-of-the-art survey papers and reviews on future directions of enterprise information systems.

CONFENIS 2007 received about five hundred submissions with selected ones included in these two volumes of proceedings. CONFENIS 2007 is to establish an international forum on the increasingly important area of Enterprise Information Systems. Distinguished scholars invited as keynote speakers include: John Warfield (George Mason University, USA), Shoubo Xu (Chinese Academy of Engineering and Beijing Jiaotong University), Xiaohong Guan (Tsinghua University, China), William McCarthy (Michigan State University, USA), G. Swanson (International Federation for Systems Research) and Yushun Fan (Tsinghua University, China).

We hope that this proceedings will serve our authors as an avenue to contribute to the progresses in the state-of-knowledge and state-of-the-art in EIS and its applications; meanwhile, we hope it will serve information systems professionals worldwide as an avenue to gain a new perspective on how the global business and world economy are impacted by EIS. We are very grateful to have the sponsorship of Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications and Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics for this conference. We would specially like to thank Dean Tingjie Lu, Professor Huaying Shu, Associate Dean Zhanhong Xin and Dr. Jiayin Qi of the School of Economics and Management of Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications, Professor Lu Liu and Professor Guoping Xia of Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics, former Chair of IFIP TC8, Professor J. Dewald Roode (South Africa), former Vice-Chair of IFIP TC8, Professor David Avison (France), Secretary of IFIP TC8, Professor Isabel Ramos (Portugal), and Vice-Chair of IFIP TC8, Professor Jan Pries-Heje (Denmark), for their encouragement and guidance throughout this endeavor. We are also deeply grateful to many individual reviewers who worked with us so diligently.

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