Preface

When my friend and research partner, Prof. Dr. José Poças Rascão, invited me to edit a book about Information Architecture (IA), almost one year ago, I knew it would be an opportune and interesting knowledge journey. There is no question about the value of information for anyone today. As the world became more connected and interactive, complexity also grows, leading to critical decision-making processes. For its solving, continuously, we all need information. In another event, which is quite typical even in the most remote areas of the Planet, we all have access to a new technological infrastructure that allows easy information production, sharing, communication and storage. Information is also a component of the way we connect with each other, form new organizations – some commercial, profitable, others not – serving also to compose sectors, segments and other groups that were studied by researchers for decades, in fields as Sociology, Anthropology, Marketing, Strategy, Geography, among many others. With facts like these, information is rapidly becoming an item of the routinely life, a mandatory factor for any human being to be recognized and integrated to social, economic and political systems.

As information is perceived as a more essential resource, its function as an agent to groups’ formation, identity and activities, as it happens with any commercial, non-profit or governmental organization, also deserves demands more attention. This factor results in a relevant opportunity to study its managerial principles. Among several of this fundamental, resides Information Architecture. As cited by seminal authors, like Saul Wurman, Thomas Davenport, Manuel Castells, Pierre Lévy and many others, information (and knowledge) have some interesting factors and aspects that require precise definition to be applied for those arrangements – as, for instance, the new “start-up” era enterprises. Information architecture, as it may be noticed from one intuitive attempt to define it conceptually, relates to design, formation, conception, grouping and application of information. It is a wide, dynamic conceptual field, which relates completely to practical aspects, resulting in an attractive and up-to-date arena for researchers, scholars and market agents.

Information architecture was elected to be the focus of this project, producing a multifaceted, multidisciplinary book, which encompass contributions from areas such as Engineering, Medicine, Banking, Financing, Market, Project management, Logistics and many others. Authors from several countries and markets exposed their knowledge and experiences about IA, bringing a remarkable content for readers with several interests. In the following text, chapter contents are firstly presented and commented.
The first section is composed of three chapters, which presents a word from the editors, organizers of the book. In the first chapter, George Jamil, Liliane Jamil, Augusto Vieira and António Xavier analyzed how the concept of IA allows to define or receive definitions from business modelling. It is a dynamic, fundamental and potential relationship, which can result in potential strategic maneuvers and actions for one organization in order to obtain a better and sustainable competitive advantage. This study ends with an approach in the sector of Healthcare services and systems, where IA and business modelling can be related to improve overall services quality.

Prof. José Rascão consolidated some of his thoughts about the concept of information architecture, in the chapter two, discussing it deeply, from a thorough literature review and experience approach. As the central concept is worked in this level, the reader can develop a better reading experience and receive the main conceptual contribution from the book.

Prof. Rascão also wrote the chapter three, where he detailed the methodological design aspects for information architecture, relating it to practical aspects and inserting IA as a managerial discipline. The potentiality of the relationship between information and Architecture concepts allow the reader to understand how organizational models can reach planning, project and mapping designs for any desired application, integrating information management into the most critical analysis demanded by any corporation.

The second section of the book is dedicated to discuss the complex and challenging conceptual scenario for information architecture. This section details the main concept and also approaches its conceptual connection with other fundamentals, leading to a clear description for IA description, enabling the reader to develop his or her comprehension towards a sophisticated information management situation.

Olivia Pestana opens this second section, with chapter Four, applying the post-custodial paradigm as a modern approach of information science to study the information in a real case, in the Portuguese Healthcare system. This study produces a model for information construction and management in the healthcare unit, relating it as an informational services unit, resulting in an interesting observation of this new paradigmatic definition for information science.

Chapter Five, authored by Tibor Koltay, promotes a relationship study of information architecture and information literacy, even observing how the overload can be perceived and analyzed with these conceptual framework. His writings are composed of a detailed theoretical review, an evaluation of the popular issues around those informational facts and aspects and new propositions as a final result, where the application of new literacies can optimize information management, eliminating redundancies, unneeded information.

In the chapter Six, Kijpokin Kasemsap explores the roles of knowledge management and organizational innovation in new globalized businesses models. The author, presenting the intricate context of global competition, as one company must assess its informational resources, gathered in its several interactions with customers, suppliers and other economical agents, studies the conceptual and practical relationships of these areas.

Maria José Souza and Isabel Moço conducted a review of organizational theories, in the light of demands for innovation, change and knowledge management, in chapter Seven. The authors explored not the historical approach of these developments, but devoted their study for analytical models building, calling attention for the investment decision between technology and people, and discussing it as a factor for corporation’s survival.
Learning and uncertainty are the components of innovation management mainly studied by João Paulo Coelho Marques, focusing on the knowledge management and innovation process models, reaching the organizational holistic approach in Chapter Eight. One case study, analyzing a Portuguese footwear company consolidates the learning as a knowledge management process, based on technology licensing.

Chapter Nine, written by Paula Figueiredo and Maria José Souza, observes the leadership exercise, perceiving the Transformational Leadership model as the most considered by leaders and followers. As leadership is a remarkable factor in Today’s organizational management, the authors contribute on analyzing several of its social aspects, as influencing, developing others, inspiration and change catalysis.

In chapter Ten, André Salgado, Fabrício Pereira and André Freire considered information architecture focus on relationship with the important information system design aspect of usability. This chapter presents concepts and techniques to help organizations apply user-centered methods to design and evaluate Information Architecture in their Information Systems, detailing this approach to Card sorting method, analyzed both theoretical and practically.

The design of business models for new competitive enterprises demand innovative approaches and market analysis. Filipe Soeiro holds a study of this interesting new entrepreneurial dilemma in chapter eleven, as the author explored network-related business models for the innovative game industry. He also reflected on possibilities of value aggregation by the cooperation of contents, as, for instance, music.

André Grützmann, André Zambalde and Paulo Bermejo evaluated, on their chapter twelve, the importance of information architecture on the design of new internet web-based tools to help organizations to innovate. As all of these factors are present in modern business sectors, their research offer opportune ways to understand how information must be managed and take into considerations in such projects.

Entrepreneurial organizational architecture – expressed by its structure, communication and relations – were assessed by Jonathan Bishop in chapter thirteen. The author evaluated how new forms of business and organizational relationships can affect and result in better performance for workers and their service offers and production. A case study is conducted to clarify these concepts and its connections.

Section III, Cases and practical approach, brings real cases where information architecture and modern management were analyzed by authors. As a multidisciplinary and transnational analysis, this study is very rich with real experiences, researched with theoretical application, producing, as result, different and complementary views for book’s main concepts, completing the conceptual results obtained with the two previous sections.

In chapter fourteen, José Rascão and Antonio Peñalver reported a case study that illustrates information architecture in practice. Along with the objective of a precise definition for IA, the authors also detailed its difference for several others, as business architecture, governance, network architecture, and many others. This approach leads to a robust conceptualization for information architecture.

Fernando Belfo explores an opportune viewpoint from cognitive sciences as he analyses the comprehension of how individuals act alone and in groups when thinking about working in chapter fifteen. He studied the job delegation dilemma, as to assign people for tasks in a multifaceted environment as in IT production, focusing the brain structure – as related to cognitive aspects – as the main subject to consider.
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Chapter sixteen, written by Carlos Páscoa, Benjamin Fernandes and José Tribolet, presents the corporate governance context as a critical factor and process to keep organizational objectives defined, allowing to a better planning capabilities. Their study approaches the case of a military organization, the Portuguese Air Force structure to evaluate governance principles, demands and its effective application.

The relationship of information architecture in practice with several disciplines appears as the focus again in chapter seventeen. Henrique Mamede authored a research where he studied the influence of application of IA principles to structure organizational plans and internal relationships, resulting in defined and robust ways to manage information and its associate resources, as systems and technologies.

Managing software production, as a process that intensively demand and produce information, is considered by Pankaj Khamtan in chapter eighteen. The author approached the interesting and up-to-date software process context relating the use of a supporting wiki structure in agile production environment, proposing a model to optimize this productive relationship.

Chapter nineteen, produced by Cláudio Pessoa, Monica Nassif, Renata Baracho and George Jamil, observed the case of an IT organization who plans to adopt information architecture, studying its preparations to do so. A report of an extensive qualitative research presents the results of an organizational situation where separated efforts brought a potential application for IA in new contracts and services.

In chapter twenty, Edilaine Soares and Fernando Zaidan reported how optimal information management can produce results for some critical aspects of human resources management, considering the people’s career plans can be better structured. Their study, opportunistically, was conducted on the information technology sector.

Pedro Anunciação and Sónia Nunes evaluated the role of information in organizational intelligence in chapter twenty-one, as this last concept is receiving increased relevance. Studying this theme in a Portuguese Healthcare unit, the authors reported how intelligence is defined, created and can influence in organizational maintenance and future planning in dynamic market situations.

Chapter twenty-two, written by Maria Irene Sá, aimed to relate information architecture to the important concepts of usability and accessibility. The author describes how IA became more important to assure better application of those related concepts to build orientations for tools, methods and systems in the so-called informational space in organizations.

Corporative networks, understood as a critical strategic arrangement for innovative companies in modern competitive scenarios, were explored by André Grützmann, Cleber Castro, Anderson Meireles and Renan Rodrigues in chapter twenty-three. Their chapter observed these business arrangements from the online social networks and organizational architecture viewpoints, bringing new lights for its proposition and formation.

Finally, in chapter twenty-four, the reactions to new challenges in the world health systems planning and how information is critical for these plans production, were analyzed by Jorge Magalhães, Zulmira Hartz and Adelaide Antunes. The authors considered new inter-organizational partnerships for product development as the focus of their study, observing how knowledge is produced and transferred throughout the entrepreneurial and governmental arrays.
This book addresses a complex subject, as it was proposed to produce knowledge about an essential and innovative theme: information architecture. In editor’s view, as an overall basis to compose a contributive text for the readers, it was needed to provide a multidisciplinary and actual text, bringing experiences from several sources, analyzed through the lenses of relevant theoretical reviews. We strongly believe that we achieved this goal, with not only a contribution for this moment, but building a cooperative conceptual and practical platform where our readers find stable understanding about information architecture principles and applications.

Wishing you a good reading.

On behalf of the editors,

George Leal Jamil
Informações em Rede, Brazil