This book, *Collaborative Business Process Engineering and Global Organizations: Frameworks for Service Integration*, provides a model for collaborative business that not only has a well researched foundation but has also been deployed and tested by the authors in practice.

In the last 10 years, the Internet and Web, supported by several advances in information and communication technology (ICT), has transformed irrevocably the way we work, the way we collaborate with individuals and partner organizations and the way we communicate with each other. As a result there is dramatic change in business landscape. The Web enables businesses to extend and expand their operational boundaries and technological boundaries, as well as helps to achieve better synergy among the triad of a business – people, process and technology – both internal and external to an enterprise.

The Web is no longer just a one-way communication and information dissemination medium, that many businesses have exploited quite effectively. Web is now also global platform for fielding applications, for interaction, coordination and collaboration, and for socializing. Advances in the Web, which are now traced into stages as Web 1.0, Web 2.0 and Web 3.0, are heralding a new era, a paradigm shift, in business – which is popularly known as Business 2.0, Collaboration 2.0, CRM 2.0, BI 2.0, and Innovation 2.0.

In response to call for chapters for the *Handbook of Research on Web 2.0, 3.0 and X.0: Technologies, Business, and Social Applications* (IGI Global, 2009) that I am
currently editing, I have had contributions both from researchers and practitioners on a wide range of topics, from business-IT/Web strategies, and Web-enabled business processes, to novel applications of Web in areas such as cross-organizational collaboration, synergizing an enterprise, and the environment. This is just one evidence that alerts (and warns) everyone of us that the Web is no longer a mere tool for communication; it is a global platform as well as a business mechanism that supports a number of different business activities, processes and functions going beyond the traditional, often predefined, business-to-consumer (B2C) and business-to-business (B2B) transactions.

A large number of senior executives believe now businesses - small and large, local and global - need to seriously consider and innovatively and effectively employ ICT and Web as strategic business tools to sustain and excel in the highly competitive world we live in now. Though the opportunities for exploiting these new strategic business tools are many and varied, one area that is gaining greater interest is one-to-many and many-to-many dynamic, real-time business-to-business coordination and collaboration. The challenges of conducting and realizing full potential of many-to-many collaborative businesses are, however, huge, and you need to identify, understand, and address those challenges effectively, and embark on a new journey in this not well-known trail. This book is a helpful, timely resource to help you and show you directions when you are at a cross-road in this endeavor.

Businesses no longer operate in isolation – they need to collaborate with other businesses in the same as well other industry sectors; they need to transition into what we might call collaborative businesses. Though already there are some businesses that falls under this category of collaborative businesses, many of them have met with problems and barriers in the conception of, or transition to, their new collaborative business model, and their journey has not been smooth, either.

The authors of this book - Bhuvan Unhelkar, Abbass Ghanbary and Houman Younessi – who have multidisciplinary expertise and complementary skills and real-world experience have come together to present through this book a robust research-based approach to transitioning traditional businesses to collaborative businesses. This book points you right directions and appropriate methodologies for transitioning into collaborative businesses, and encourages you to consider the various significant aspects of collaborative business processes and strategies.

Beginning with a discussion on foundations of collaborative business and an overview of technologies that support business collaboration, the authors take you through several components and constituents of collaborative business - architectures, organizational structures and quality assurance, to name a few, all encapsulated in what the authors call “Collaborative Business Process Engineering (CBPE). They also discuss often neglected but important socio-cultural aspects and change management that are keys to success of such collaborations. They put together
several practical aspects of CBPE in a Collaborative Web Based System (CWBS), and demonstrated applications of CWBS through two case studies.

You the readers – whether you are a business executive, a business/IT consultant, a developer of business process engineering tools, a researcher, an academic, or someone interested in collaborative business – will surely find this book worth reading and an invaluable resource in your practical work. I wish this book my very best.

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