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Section I. Fundamental Concepts and Theories

This section serves as the foundation for this exhaustive reference tool by addressing crucial theories essential to the understanding of virtual communities. Chapters found within these pages provide an excellent framework in which to position virtual communities within the field of information science and technology. Individual contributions provide overviews on the history of virtual communities, their impact on organizations, and overviews on various phenomena such as social computing and communities of practice. Within this introductory section, the reader can learn and choose from a compendium of expert research on the elemental theories underscoring virtual communities.

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David P. Colachico, Azusa Pacific University, USA

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Mikko Jäkälä, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

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Jan Heim, SINTEF, Norway

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Dimitris Kardaras, Athens University of Economics and Business, Greece
Adéla Zichová, City University London, UK

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Section III. Tools and Technologies

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Christina Brey, European Association of Distance Teaching Universities, The Netherlands

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Armando Cirrincione, Università Bocconi, Italy

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  Sunita Kappuswamy, Anna University Chennai, Chennai, India
  P. B. Shankar Narayan, Pondicherry University, Puducherry, India

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  Ignacio Navarro, Georgia State University, USA
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Anna-Karin Tötterman, Åbo Akademi University, Finland

Chapter 6.8. Sharing Knowledge in Virtual Communities ........................................................................ 2001

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Thomas Ritter, Copenhagen Business School, Denmark

Chapter 6.13. The Impact of Customer Churn on Social Value Dynamics

Przemyslaw Kazienko, Wroclaw University of Technology, Poland & BT Innovate, British Telecom Group, Intelligent Systems Research Centre (ISRC), UK
Dymitr Ruta, BT Innovate, British Telecom Group, Intelligent Systems Research Centre (ISRC), UK
Piotr Bródka, Wroclaw University of Technology, Poland


Rachel McLean, Manchester Metropolitan University Business School, UK

Section VII. Critical Issues

This section addresses conceptual and theoretical issues related to virtual communities, which include issues related to customer relationship management, critical success factors, and business strategies. Within these chapters, the reader is presented with analysis of the most current and relevant conceptual inquires within this growing field of study. Particular chapters address the socio-technical challenges of the semantic web, and the impact of communications technology on trust. Overall, contributions within this section ask unique, often theoretical questions related to the study of virtual communities and, more often than not, conclude that solutions are both numerous and contradictory.

Chapter 7.1. A Critical Cultural Reading of “YouTube”

Luc Pauwels, University of Antwerp, Belgium
Patricia Hellriegel, Lessius University College, Belgium

Chapter 7.2. Challenges on Semantic Web Services

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Miklos Nagy, The Open University, UK
Dominik Žyskowski, Poznan University of Economics, Poland
Konstanty Haniewicz, Poznan University of Economics, Poland
Witold Abramowicz, Poznan University of Economics, Poland
Monika Kaczmarek, Poznan University of Economics, Poland

Chapter 7.3. Assessing the Total Cost of Ownership of Virtual Communities: The Case of the Berlin Stock Exchange

Jan vom Brocke, University of Liechtenstein, Principality of Liechtenstein
Christian Sonnenberg, University of Liechtenstein, Principality of Liechtenstein
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Diana Bargazlan, Politehnic University of Timisoara, Romania
Myriam Lewkowicz, Université de Technologie de Troyes, France
Gila Molcho, Israel Institute of Technology, Technion, Israel
Section VIII. Emerging Trends

This section highlights research potential within virtual communities while exploring uncharted areas of study for the advancement of the discipline. Chapters within this section highlight new trends in the development of virtual worlds and the growing potential of online universities. The contributions that conclude this exhaustive, multi-volume set provide emerging trends and suggestions for future research within this rapidly expanding discipline.

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