

Preface

This book is to provide some answers to business managers, management consultants, and researchers who regularly question whether the contribution of IT to business performance can be measured at all. Of course, there are a number of dilemmas in appropriately measuring the value of IT. To mention two: it is increasingly difficult to isolate the role and function of IT from other aspects that make up a product, a service, a distribution channel, a business process, and so on; and there's an enormous time lag between IT investments and their results. Yet, the adagium, "if we cannot measure, we cannot measure" still holds true, also when the value of IT is concerned.

Based on my 15+ years of experience in this field, gained as a management consultant and scholar, I have known for quite some time that measurement of IT value is possible, at least to some extent. A few years back, I felt more emphasis was needed on the theoretical framing of my thoughts and concepts. Consequently, I worked on my PhD, resulting in an academic thesis on IT value measurement, which was published in 1996.

Then, I began to work on this book some three years ago with a simple question: how do you link the many lessons learned in practice with theoretical approaches for IT measurement already available? The concepts, frameworks and cases described in this book lean heavily on authors, researchers, and management consultants who understand and have captured the management perspective on organizational renewal, technological innovation, and IT managerial issues. Many insights in the themes of managing and measuring business value from IT and improvement in IT supply were drawn from the work of Dick Nolan, Dave Norton, Mike Hammer, Jim Champy, Peter Keen, Howard Rubin, Michael Scott-Morton, Bob Benson, Eric Brynjolfsson, John Henderson, Venkatraman, and other experts in this field, predominantly based in the Boston, Massachusetts area. I have always been greatly impressed by the innovative yet practical approaches to address complex business and IT-related issues devised by a number of thought leaders at "the other side of the Atlantic." I have been privileged to have worked with a number of them, and I would like to thank them to convey how much I value my interactions with and learning from them.

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