

Preface

Information technology (IT) has revolutionized the way in which organizations are run. Despite the fact that old paradigms are still used in business administration, IT has changed the ground rules of strategic management, marketing, logistics, organizational design, human resource management, accounting and so forth. The old strategic models developed during the industrial era are things of the past and it would be unwise not to take into account the role the Internet has had in marketing frameworks. It is also impossible to ignore organizational architectures, mainly virtual and process-based ones or even not to appreciate that logistics and supply chain management have to be innovated within the context of information technology.

Concepts like learning organization, intellectual capital, knowledge management, performance evaluation, e-commerce and the like rely heavily on the possibilities offered by information technology.

We are still deploying management theories developed for an industrial-based world in companies, despite living in a knowledge economy where intangibility is the actual path for sustainable success and gaining a competitive edge.

Every facet of management must be reappraised by academics, researchers and practitioners—from strategy to logistics, from marketing to accounting and from organizational design to personnel management, to name but a few. We should accept and appreciate the turmoil and shake-up IT has created for companies around the world and the resulting need these companies have to find new *modus operandi* and business models.

The main scope of this book is to show how IT has created a new mandate for management as a whole and for all its ramifications, in order to develop new business models and frameworks based on the important role IT has in these fields of knowledge.

Hence, a given chapter of this book will tackle the role and impact of IT on strategy as well as the resulting new models to be used in this context, while another may examine marketing in similar fashion. In this manner we will have given at least a small glimpse of the major transformations IT has brought about in the way corporations need to be managed, as well as propose new models based on the pervasive role IT exercises in the current business arena.

This book was developed for a hybrid audience, i.e.:

- Executives and practitioners keen to understand the impact of IT on their business models, as well as seeking for a new mandate for management that takes into account the pervasive role of information technology within their competitive boundaries;
- Academics who want to exchange ideas about new management frames of reference regarding the influence of information technology and try to innovate their fields of research using IT as an enabler; and also

- MBA students who want to compare and analyze both old and new paradigms based on the deployment of information technology within companies.

There are several books that analyze the overriding need to rethink management, but only a few address information technology as a main enabler in this endeavor.

As can be appreciated, one book would be insufficient to encompass all these issues; consequently, only the most relevant chapters addressing different facets of management were chosen by both the reviewers and the editor to compose this volume.

This book contains 16 chapters, gathered under four section headings according to the field of knowledge addressed. Section 1 analyzes IT-Based Strategy; Section 2 analyzes IT-Based Organizational Design and Behavior; Section 3 analyzes IT-Based Marketing and Retailing; and, finally, Section 4 analyzes IT-Based Logistics and Accounting.

Section 1—IT-Based Strategy—addresses how corporate and business strategies have been challenged by information technology, as well as how it can be used to increase the competitiveness of companies.

Section 2—IT-Based Organizational Design and Behavior—features chapters that present new organizational architectures made possible by information technology, in addition to other issues it influences in terms of organizational behavior, such as managerial responsibility, workspace design, etc.

Section 3—IT-Based Marketing and Retailing—analyzes strategic marketing management enhanced by IT. By the same token, the evolution of retailing as a whole, as well as in specific industries, and the role of IT in this improvement are also presented in a couple of chapters.

Finally, Section 4—IT-Based Logistics and Accounting—includes chapters showing how information technology has created new *modus operandi* for the logistics and accounting realms within the business arena.

Naturally, the idea of grouping chapters together into sections was to make the book more readable, though there will clearly be cases where chapter topics overlap. Hence, some chapters might be classified into more than one single section. This shows that management is merely a single field of knowledge and also that a systemic view of all its facets is paramount for a better understanding of the behavior of companies in their competitive arenas.