This special section contains extended versions of selected papers from the 10th International Conference for Global Business and Development: Creativity & Innovation: Imperatives for Global Business and Development, Kyoto, Japan, August 8-11, 2007. The set includes two articles with both theoretical and empirical content that were chosen articles because they cover a wide range of issues, promote cross-learning, and contribute to the present understanding and the existing body of knowledge in Information Systems in the Service Sector.

Marco Papa and Marina Avgeri develop a holistic framework for the evaluation of the online services delivered by the Official National Tourism Organization (NTO) portals. Despite the diffusion and adoption of Internet as a marketing tool, very few studies have examined whether the NTO portals are accomplishing their intended goals: to promote the destination and to satisfy the travelers’ needs. The paper covers this lacuna by examining four core dimensions: marketing, customer, technical and information performance of the 25 European Union portals. It also provides a first time assessment of country specific factors that may have an impact on the online offerings. The findings indicate high variability across the 25 NTO portals, with the most popular tourism destinations - Greece and Italy - underperforming with respect to all four perspectives examined. Finally, it provides evidence that the economic development contributes to the online performances.

In their paper of “Old and New Paradigms for IT Services Offshoring”, Paolo Popoli and Arturo Popoli present a very innovative point of view for looking at the IT Outsourcing business. The traditional approach - that consider the outsourcing as a “cost reduction tool” for non-core business - is replaced by a new concept of outsourcing as “value creation strategy” for core business directly merged in the value chain process. The new approach shows how the business relationship changes too: the client-provider relationship is replaced from a real business partnership, where the importance of ability in sharing and reciprocally increase the core skill set is highlighted. Trends in the new emerging markets confirm this approach and open a new scenario for future evolutions. The paper develops its analysis both on a theoretical and empirical point of view, and is enriched by a technical analysis where new key success factors have been pointed out according with the new proposed vision; the ongoing, structured management of both the contract and the relationship are considered as the crucial methods for a successful partnership.
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