The study of virtual organizations encompasses several research fields, and the variables involved in each of them are sometimes closely related. This represents a challenge for managers, since the decision taken about the technical tools to use, the organizational structure, incentives or procedures, for example, are tightly linked, and this represents a complex problem in itself. Nevertheless, the biggest challenge in virtual organization management is the lack of experience. Although the phenomenon is not new—there are plenty of successful communities of practice in the net—most of the managers and professionals have limited experience in networking, and only as users in specific areas of knowledge or business activities, and are not fully aware of networking possibilities and limitations. This lack of experience implies a big trial when facing the problems involved in virtual organizations management.

But this lack of experience is only relative. Information technology is not new. Nowadays, every manager has an extensive experience, at least as a user, in business processes that are partially or totally done by electronic means. The inexperience lies in the virtuality of the organization itself, not the business processes. But the management of an organization completely virtual poses a set of complex decisions completely new in respect to traditional IS management. In the new virtual organization, some powerful social mechanisms for motivation and control disappear, the human resources techniques cannot be fully applied, and some essential ways of knowledge transmission and innovation are impossible. The
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