

GUEST EDITORIAL PREFACE

Special Issue on the Smart, Open and Social Information Systems

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Beginning from informal groups, such as Usenets and Multi-user Dungeons, the first true leap in social information systems occurred with the advent of Internet Relay Chat, Chat Rooms and Electronic Mailing lists. With the advent of Web 2.0 technologies, Information Systems leaped forward towards becoming more social and informative and Facebook and Twitter became the most popular with the vernacular counterparts in countries such as China. Social information systems are information systems based on social technologies and open collaboration. The essence of social information systems is that they attract a large number of people together in a virtual space and they become social when a user can interact with chosen few without knowledge of others. People can interact with each other and even face to face (as in GTalk and SKYPE) although distant apart. The old community platforms die as the new technologies emerge. The community of people, though, may remain the same. Wherever there is a large gathering, there is possibility of commerce, transactions, announcements,

competitions, events, games, sharing, research, teaching and even marriages. Not only these, new business models (or enhancements of already existing business models), such as group buying, also develop in such systems.

When the World comes together, it becomes easier but competitive to do business. So both technological, social and business issues arise in social information systems. Among the recent issues are those related to knowledge management, user and consumer behavior, impact on business, data mining, sentiment analysis and then big data analysis for identifying patterns. Firms also uses social information systems for customer service, product testing, and measuring people's vibes about their brand, a predominantly business and commercial purpose. Ultimate the goal of all these is to improve the business and add to a firm's bottom line. The technical perspective involves addressing issues of user engagement, data mining and analytics, and technology for storing large amount of data thus generated every moment. The third perspective is the social perspective,

which involves the study of social-technical systems, which are based on social technologies and open collaboration. It is concerned with the broader social perspective of making substantial beneficial contributions to society at large. People now form communities to raise votes and attract huge fan following. People love and fight in virtual space and perhaps never meet physically. The social space also raises concerns for crimes, thefts (of passwords), blackmailing and sniffing on other's personal space, hacking and stalking. And not to forget sexting which has become common among youngsters. Thus, Social Information Systems have huge impact on society. And in one sense it increases the speed of things that happen in daily life.

PACIS 2013 was organized to bring IS Scholar together who are conducting research on Social Information Systems, an emerging topic in the field of IS. Based on recommendations received from track chairs, papers presented in PACIS 2013 were invited for submission to the special issue of JGIM. Finally, three papers were selected for publication.

The three paper presented in this issue discuss discrete topics related of Social Information Systems. The first paper by Kang and Lee addresses the economic aspect of social information system in the online gaming industry. They investigate the network externalities in the Online Gaming industry of Korea, a two-sided market with low switching costs. The paper

provides interesting insights about improving the gaming network.

The second paper by Lee et al. discusses the issue of anonymity and its impact on Social Information System. Anonymity helps one in doing socially unacceptable things without revealing one's identity. This paper attempts to define online anonymity and characterizes its dimensions, namely, unlinkability, unobservability, and pseudonymity.

The third paper by Yuce et al. analyzes the role of networking towards collective action, a social issue, with the background research done in Arab countries. They conduct sentiment analysis to understand user interactions and provide insight into collective action taking place through social information systems.

The three articles thus address mainly business and social aspects of social information systems. We are sure, readers will gain insight into these and understand more objectively the role of social information systems whereby technology plays a key role in gathering and organizing the masses.

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Guest Editors

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