

## *First Call for Papers*

# ***The 2nd international SIG Prag workshop on "IT Artefact Design & Workpractice Improvement" ADWI-2013***

*June 5, 2013, Tilburg, the Netherlands*

### **Background – pragmatic perspectives**

There are many signs in the information systems (IS) community for a stronger pragmatic movement. This can be seen in a growing interest for research approaches and methods in IS that emphasise contribution to practice and collaboration between the practice and academia. Action research, which aims for knowledge development through collaboration and intervention in real settings, is receiving more and more academic credibility (Baskerville & Myers, 2004; Davison et al, 2004). This can also be said about design research that aims for the generation of new and fruitful artefacts (Hevner et al, 2004; Gregor & Jones, 2007). Research through evaluations has long had a strong place in IS research (Ward et, 1996; Serafeimidis & Smithson, 2003). There exist also several approaches and frameworks that combine or integrate elements from the above-mentioned approaches, like e.g. practice research (Goldkuhl, 2011), collaborative practice research (Mathiassen, 2002), practical science (Gregor, 2008), engaged scholarship (Mathiassen & Nielsen, 2008) and action design research (Sein et al, 2011). Underlying these different approaches is a quest for practical relevance of the conducted research (Benbasat & Zmud, 1999; Van de Ven, 2007). It is not enough to only “mirror” the world through descriptions and explanations but a pragmatic orientation recognizes intervention and design as a way of knowing and a means for building knowledge about social and institutional phenomena (Aakhus, 2007). There is a need for knowledge of other epistemic kinds that contributes more clearly to the improvement of IS practices.

A pragmatic orientation can also be seen in the increasing interest in the conceptualisation of practices, activities, agency and actions. Practice theorizing has gained an increased attention in IS studies (Orlikowski, 2008; Leonardi, 2011). There has been an interest for agency and action oriented theories in IS for quite some time; e.g. activity theory (Nardi, 1996), structuration theory (Orlikowski, 1992), social action theorizing (Hirschheim et al, 1996), human agency theorizing (Boudreau & Robey, 2005) and language action perspective (Winograd & Flores, 1986). From this follows also an interest for social and pragmatic views of the IT artefact (Aakhus & Jackson, 2005). This includes views of the IT artefact as contextually embedded and carriers of those social contexts (Orlikowski & Iacono, 2001) and such artefacts being tools for action and communication (Ågerfalk, 2003; Markus & Silver, 2008).

This enhanced practice and action orientation follows a growing awareness within IS scholars towards pragmatism as a research foundation (e.g. Goles & Hirschheim, 2000; Ågerfalk, 2010; Goldkuhl, 2012). It is not the case that IS scholars suddenly become pragmatists in their research orientation. It is rather the case that there is move from an implicit pragmatism to an explicit one (Goldkuhl, 2012). For a long time IS scholars have addressed practical problems with an interest for improvement. That interest has led to the extensive development of methods, models and constructive frameworks for not only the design of IT artefacts, but also related to several other IS/IT phenomena like e.g. innovation management, business process management, project management, IT service management just to mention a few. These methods actually reveal an on-going search for knowledge of other epistemic kinds for advancing understanding of information technology, information systems, and practice.

### **Workshop site and purpose**

After the success of the first ADWI workshop in 2012, it is now time for a second workshop on *IT Artefact Design & Workpractice Improvement* (ADWI-2013). ADWI-2012 ([www.vits.org/adwi/](http://www.vits.org/adwi/)) was run in Barcelona in June 2012 just before ECIS. ADWI-2013 will take place on June 5, which is just before ECIS (taking place in Utrecht on June 6-8). ADWI-2013 will take place in Tilburg which is fairly close to Utrecht (one hour away).

ADWI-2013 intends to bring scholars and practitioners together for a knowledge exchange and development on research foundations and practical contributions concerning the design and improvement of IT artefacts and workpractices. The ADWI workshop is intended to be a developmental arena with thoughtful and constructive feedback from reviews and comments on site. ADWI should be a place where you can present ideas in papers

and get fruitful feedback for further development of the papers. A developmental arena means also taking responsibility for pushing contributions further to high-quality journal publications. From the last workshop (ADWI-2012) several papers have been pushed further into two special issues in the open access journal *Systems, Signs & Actions*. The themes are “Collaboration and validation in practice research and design research” and “IT Artefact & practice theorizing – pragmatic perspectives”. We plan to do similar for this workshop. At least one special issue will be arranged in *Systems, Signs & Actions* inviting promising papers from ADWI-2013. The theme will be decided on later. We will possibly also work with some other outlet for another special issue. This depends on the outcome of the workshop.

## Topics

The workshop can include papers from diverse fields of IS. We do not try to enumerate such fields below; we only present three broad topic areas (as three main pragmatic orientations). We invite papers to ADWI-2013 in the following areas:

- The design, selection, adaptation and use of *research methods* and *approaches* that emphasise improvement of, collaboration with and intervention in IS practices (e.g. approaches like action research, design research, evaluation research, practice research, engaged scholarship).
- The generation and use of *practice, activity, agency, action oriented theories* (or other types of knowledge) about IS phenomena.
- Different kinds of *knowledge* (e.g. practical theories, frameworks, models, methods) *that contribute to the improvement of IS practices*. This includes examples of such knowledge from improvement, which can be taken from diverse IS fields.

An information system is always an embedded part of some practice. It is never an isolated entity without relations to social practices. The notion “IS practice”, which is used in the topics above, stands for diverse IS related practices like e.g. strategizing, development, procurement, deployment, use, evaluation and service management of IS/IT.

## Dates and submission details

*Submissions:* March 25, 2013

*Notification:* May 1, 2013

*Final manuscripts:* May 27, 2013

*Workshop:* June 5, 2013, Tilburg, the Netherlands, (just before the 21<sup>st</sup> European Conference on Information Systems, ECIS-2013)

The workshop website is [www.vits.org/adwi2013/](http://www.vits.org/adwi2013/). The workshop will follow an ordinary scientific procedure with submission of papers and selection of papers through peer-review (pursued by an international program committee). Papers are expected to be between 5-16 pages. We welcome full research papers as well as shorter papers (work-in-progress or position papers). Submissions should be sent as e-mail attachments to [goran.goldkuhl@liu.se](mailto:goran.goldkuhl@liu.se). We use an ECIS-like template that can be found at the workshop website ([www.vits.org/adwi2013/](http://www.vits.org/adwi2013/)). Workshop proceedings will be electronically published and distributed.

## Program co-chairs

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## Organisers

AIS Special interest group on Pragmatist IS research (SIG Prag)

Netherlands research School for Information and Knowledge Systems (SIKS)

## Programme Committee

To be announced

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