First Call for Papers

AIS SIGPRAG and Innovation Value Institute
Pre-ICIS workshop on
"Practice-based Design and Innovation of Digital Artifacts"

December 10, 2016, Dublin, Ireland

Background – pragmatic perspectives

There have been many calls in the information systems (IS) community for a stronger pragmatic focus. This can be seen in a growing interest for research approaches and methods in IS that emphasize 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 achieving more and more academic credibility (Baskerville & Myers, 2004; Davison et al, 2004). This can also be said about design science research that aims for the generation of new and useful artifacts (Hevner et al, 2004; Gregor & Jones, 2007). Research through evaluation has had a long and venerable place in IS research (Ward et, 1996; Serafeimidis & Smithson, 2003). Several approaches and frameworks that combine or integrate elements from the above-mentioned approaches have also emerged, e.g. practice research (Goldkuhl, 2011), collaborative practice research (Mathiassen, 2002), practical science (Gregor, 2008), engaged scholarship (Mathiassen & Nielsen, 2008), action design research (Sein et al, 2011) and technical action research (Wieringa & Morali, 2012). Underlying these different approaches is a quest for practical relevance of the conducted research (Benbasat & Zmud, 1999; Van de Ven, 2007; Wieringa, 2010). 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 conceptualization 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 artifact (Aakhus & Jackson, 2005). This includes views of the IT artifact as contextually embedded and carriers of those social contexts (Orlikowski & Iacono, 2001) and such artifacts being tools for action and communication (Ågerfalk, 2003; Markus & Silver, 2008). Design research practice and the contributions to practice through appropriation of knowledge and methods and the contributions to academia through knowledge artifacts has been discussed (Donnellan, Sjöström, Helfert, 2012).

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 artifacts, 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 focus

This AIS SIGPRAG Pre-ICIS workshop has a general orientation towards pragmatic perspectives on IS as described above. The focus is on "Practice-based Design and Innovation of Digital Artifacts". This means an emphasis on digital artifacts as embedded in social practices and carriers of elements in such practices. It emphasizes also the innovative nature of designing new artifacts and new practices. The workshop acknowledges different sub-themes within this broad workshop theme:

- Ways to research practice-based design and innovation of digital artifacts
- Ways to conceptualize and describe practices
- Ways to conceptualize and describe digital artifacts
- The processes of innovation and design of digital artifacts and practices

Topics within these sub-themes are described below.

Workshop purpose

This workshop is arranged in the same spirit and a continuation of earlier successful SIGPRAG workshops on "Practice research", "IT Artifact Design & Workpractice Improvement" and "Action Research & Design Research Integrations".

This SIGPRAG workshop intends to bring scholars and practitioners together for a knowledge exchange and development on research foundations and practical contributions concerning the design and innovation of digital artifacts and practices. The SIGPRAG workshop is intended to be a developmental arena with thoughtful and constructive feedback from reviews and comments on site. The workshop 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 earlier SIGPRAG workshops (ADWI-2012, ADWI-2013 and ADWI-2014) several papers have been pushed further into special issues in the open access journal Systems, Signs & Actions. At least one special issue will be arranged in Systems, Signs & Actions inviting promising papers from this SIGPRAG workshop. 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. Topics following the identified workshop sub-themes are listed below.

Ways to research practice-based design and innovation of digital artifacts; empirical research approaches such as:
- Practice research
- Action research
- Design science research
- Action design research
- Case study research
- Evaluation research
- Discourse analysis
- Pragmatic inquiries
- Practitioner – research collaborations

Ways to research practice-based design and innovation of digital artifacts; knowledge creation approaches such as:
- Design theory development
- Method design/refinement
- Grounded theory development
- Multi-grounded theory development
- Practical theory development

Ways to conceptualize and describe practices; for example:
- Symbolic interaction
- Language action
- Socio-materiality
- Institutionalism
- Actor-networks
- Infrastructure evolution
- Socio-instrumentalism
- Distributed cognition
- Distributed agency

Ways to conceptualize and describe digital artifacts; for example:
- Ensemble view
- Socio-technical view
- Contextual view
- Functional tool view
- Affordance view
- Communicative action view

The processes of innovation and design of digital artifacts and practices; for example aspects such as:
- Innovation strategies
- Openness in innovation
- Design thinking
- Collaborative design
- Stakeholder interactions (power-playing vs. value balancing and informed consensus building)
- Practice understanding and diagnosis
- Wicked problems
- Problem formulation
- Values and goals articulation
- Idea generation
- Idea capture
- Design conversations
- Idea visualization (modeling, prototyping)
- Strategies for testing and evaluation

Dates and submission details

Submissions: September 30, 2016
Notification: October 31, 2016
Final manuscripts: November 30, 2016
Workshop: December 10, 2016

The workshop website is http://sigprag.net/. 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). For submissions we use the EasyChair system (https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=practdid2016). A format template can be found at the workshop website (http://sigprag.net/). Workshop proceedings will be electronically published and distributed. There will be a small workshop fee covering catering.

Workshop co-chairs

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Organisers

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More members to be announced.

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