

Title of the Track

Digitized acting in digital societies: the *good* and the *dark side* of online communities

Track Description

The digitalization of the society facilitates resources sharing, information diffusion, and cooperation among people. These cooperation forms go under the name of online communities. Online communities offer new digital venues for collaboration, interaction and sharing among independent actors who lack previous acquaintance and are seldom in physical contact. The existence of online communities, where both humans and technologies are constituting pillars, affects actions and behaviours of individuals, teams, and organization. The implications and consequences of such influence is however still under dispute.

On the one side, individuals, teams and organizations are using online communities to work and cooperate in a hitherto unseen manner, because online communities afford for flexibility of organizing, participated knowledge generation and circulation, empowered capability to pursue communal objectives. On the other side, online communities form virtual worlds where people may live in bubbles based on alternative facts and reality.

Online communities clash and crash existing institutions: companies are dematerialized with performance improvements and jobs losses and transformation (like in the case of crowdsourcing platforms, or professional networks, or digital marketplaces); industries are disrupted and replaced by digital platforms hosting communities of people; while public institutions are challenged by new forms of self-organizing.

Throughout the years, online communities have produced both success and failures. Several communities are active, continuously producing ideas, and engaging members on daily activities. Moreover, new communities are built in novel domains. Nevertheless, many communities fail in achieving their objectives, and become silent, or terminate their activity rather quickly.

Researchers on online communities in information systems have addressed aspects such as knowledge generation and sharing; motivations for membership; structures, rules, and coordination mechanisms of online communities. However there are several issues yet to be explored, such as the internal dynamics among different components and layers in online communities, the mechanisms that lead activities to the final aim, the phenomena at the boundaries and across the boundaries of communities, and the relationships between communities and other institutional settings. Also, more studies discussing the challenging and negative consequences of online communities are needed.

This track aims at furthering the debate among scholars on the bright and the dark side of online communities, by contributing to the theoretical knowledge on how online communities affect people and organizations in digital societies. The track welcomes both theoretical and empirical contributions

studying online communities from a wide variety of research contexts.

Paper submitted to the track shall discuss the following topics (the list is not to be intended as exhaustive):

- Design and management of online communities
- Evolution of online communities
- Online and offline dimension of communities
- Virtual and hybrid organizations
- Social networks and social media platforms
- Affordances and hindrances of social media
- Cooperation and participation through online communities
- Online communities and business organizations
- Consequences for individuals of digitized acting
- Interactions between physical organizations and online communities
- Smart cities and smart platforms
- The dark side of online communities

Online Communities coverage in other conferences and publications

The discourse on online communities is so far not coherently covered in conferences. In recent editions of both the European (ECIS) and the International Conference (ICIS) on Information Systems, online communities were not the subject of specific tracks, and the implications of the digitization of the society and the emergence of online communities were touched under the technological perspective. Social media have attracted much interest, discussing their role in digital collaboration and in the society, with related tracks to be found in the ICIS 2016, ECIS 2016, and ECIS 2015 programs. However, the main attention was on the opportunity of utilizing social media as sources of big data to identify traits of human behavior. The influence that social media as socio-technical systems may have on online communities has not been fully targeted.

The discourse on online communities has been developed more intensely in journals, and was also recently addressed by a special issue on collaboration and value-creation in online communities hosted by the Information Systems Research journal. There is an abundant literature discussing online communities, mainly focusing on the dynamics of cooperation and knowledge exchange online, and on the influence of social media on forms of collaboration and knowledge generation. Existing literature focuses mainly on the study of such dynamics, often reporting findings from traditional setting of online communities (i.e. initiatives linked either to open source software development projects, or to open innovation). Nowadays, online communities are emerging also in new domains different from the traditional ones, like politics, sharing economy, professional networks, crowdsourcing, collective action, and the complexity in this field is increasing because of the intensified intricacy of the underpinning digital platforms.

Publishing Opportunities in Leading Journals

The track chairs are planning a special issue on related topics within the Journal of the Information System (ISJ). The preliminary plan is to announce the call for paper in advance of the ECIS 2018 conference.

Track Co-Chairs

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	Short Biography	Alessio Maria Braccini is Associate Professor of Information Systems at the University of Tuscia, Italy. He holds a PhD in Management of Information Systems from the LUISS Guido Carli University. His main research interest is the impact of ICT on teams and organizations. His works appeared in journals (among which Government Information Quarterly, International Journal of Accounting Information Systems, Communications of AIS, and Journal of Cases in IT) and conferences (ICIS, ECIS, BIS, WOA, and ItAIS).
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ECIS 2018 TRACK 11

“BEYOND DIGITIZATION - FACETS OF SOCIO-TECHNICAL CHANGE”, 23RD -28TH, JUNE, 2018, IN UNIVERSITY OF PORTSMOUTH, UK, FOR THE 26TH EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Short Biography	Tommaso Federici teaches Human Resource Management at University of Tuscia (Italy) and Information Systems Management at LUISS University (Italy). His recent research interests are: Online Communities for collective action, Influence of ICT on Political Processes, Digital Natives entering the workplace. His works are published on journals – among them: Government Information Quarterly, Journal of Enterprise Information Management, Communications of AIS, and Journal of Cases in IT, VINE – chapters of book, and proceedings of conference (ICIS, ECIS, EURAM, WOA, and ItAIS).
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