Virtual Communities & Virtual Worlds

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Mini-track Chairs

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Virtual communities based on message boards, chat rooms, user groups and blogs have emerged as high activity domains on the Internet. Virtual communities are designed for a variety of purposes, ranging from Communities of Interest, Communities of Relationship (Facebook, etc.), Gaming Communities (e.g. in World of Warcraft, Second Life, etc.), and Communities of Transaction to Peer-to-Peer Communities or Mobile Communities. Web 2.0 Mechanisms are also boosting the development of Virtual Communities and the role of user-generated content within Virtual Communities. The significance of these communities is evident by the impact they have on information generation and transmission, and socialization. For example, today, blogs are quickly becoming a primary source of information in a variety of domains. The dynamic and interactive nature of these forums makes them very attractive for users and operators. An additional value offered by many of these communities is their ability to support socialization and offer an identity for the participants. While most virtual communities share these characteristics, it is also important to recognize that virtual communities are not homogeneous; they differ significantly based on the domain, purpose and benefits. Well-organized communities even expand their power across various channels and into the Offline world.

Within the field of information systems researchers are interested in studying interaction patterns, social structures, transaction processes, management aspects, business models, and design aspects of information systems and services for virtual communities. Community members interact via digital media and contribute value in the form of content, reviews, and recommendations. Related issues are trust, network effects, transaction costs and the design of services as well as the generation of innovations. "Wisdom of Crowds", "Collective Intelligence" and "Crowdsourcing" are important concepts or buzzwords describing mechanisms around user-generated content in Virtual Communities.

This minitrack welcomes empirical, conceptual and theoretical work. Despite the increasing popularity of virtual communities, several questions relating to virtual communities remain largely unexplored.

We call for papers on all aspects of Virtual Communities. Possible topics include (but are not limited to):
- Social, political and economic impact of Virtual Communities
- Community models, platforms, services, and interactions, multi-channel communities
- Management and organizational behaviour of communities
- Community-related business models
- Innovation generation and Virtual Communities (e.g. case studies on "wisdom of crowds", "collective intelligence", etc.)
- User-generated content and customer collaboration in Virtual Communities
- Peer-to-Peer or mobile services for Virtual Communities
- Case studies and empirical studies, best practices and lessons learned
- Motivation of participants in virtual communities
- Benefits of participation in and competition among virtual communities
- Information dispersion in virtual communities
- Typologies and taxonomies of virtual communities
- Evolution of and innovation in virtual communities
- Gaming Communities

This Mini-Track builds on the success of the preceding AMCIS Mini-Track on Virtual Communities. During the last eight years we have been gathering a community of researchers who are interested in the field of Virtual communities and related issues. Please visit the Mini-Track website at http://www.virtual-community.org

Important Dates

- ❖ February 20, 2009 (11:59 PM Pacific time zone): Deadline for paper submissions
- ❖ April 2, 2009: Authors will be notified of acceptances on or about this date
- ❖ April 20, 2009 (11:59 PM Pacific time zone): For accepted papers, camera ready copy due

Mini-track Chair Information

Please use the following email-address for all inquiries: AMCISMT0862008@gmail.com

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