

Information Systems Journal

Special Issue Call for Papers:

Storytelling and Information Systems

Special Issue Guest Editors:

Gerhard Schwabe, University of Zurich, Switzerland (schwabe@ifi.uzh.ch)

Erik Wende, University of Zurich, Switzerland and CEO EWork Leipzig (wende@ifi.uzh.ch)

Alexander Richter, IT University of Copenhagen, Denmark (aric@itu.dk)

In recent years there has been increasing interest in the relevance of storytelling in a range of contexts, including education, commerce, community building, and not at least in Information Systems development. Stories generally comprise accounts of actions formulated from real or imagined events, characters, a structure comprising a beginning, middle and an end, that is held together by a plot (Hayne, 2009). Their bandwidth ranges from naturally-occurring, conversational stories e.g. as private narratives or between coworkers (Yang, 2013) to stories that are presented or disseminated for a specific purpose (Barker, 2010, Nielsen, 2006, Wende, 2014).

Generally, narrative methods focus on experiences and implicit knowledge, which are not only difficult to access, but can hardly be disclosed and conveyed by listing facts alone (Gershon, 2001, Erlach, 2003). By transmitting context-laden knowledge, stories can be seen as a bridge between implicit and explicit knowledge that helps unmask some implicit components (Meyer et al., 2005, Whyte, 2013). By helping exchange implicit meanings, stories aid in establishing shared meaning structures, which are needed to interpret all other forms of knowledge (Meyer et al., 2005, Nielsen, 2006). Those shared frames of reference then build the prerequisites for effective knowledge exchange practices (Meyer et al. 2005), in which stories can complement codified knowledge in modern organizational settings (Schreyogg, 2005).

At the same time stories can be seen as narratives which enact or re-create realities and thereby support sense making, e.g. in communities of learners where digital storytelling can support reflective practices (Freidus, 2002). Storytelling can transform singular situated experiences and events into a framework of successive events, to support sense making of the complex situation for tellers and listeners (Schreyogg, 2005, Morgan, 1997). It is an intrinsically attractive form of communication that can outperform logical argument, in terms of disseminating knowledge, drawing and holding an audience's attention and achieving mutual understanding (Haghirian and Chini, 2003, Papadimitriou, 2003, Uittenbogaard, 2013, Frohlich, 2009). There is some evidence to show that stories enhance our ability to remember (Hayne, 2009, Oaks, 1996) and storytelling possesses great potential as a teaching-learning tool (LeBlanc and Hogg, 2006), as stories allow the audience to comprehend new experiences and create impressions about the storyteller's attitudes and beliefs (Yang, 2013, Adaval and Wyer, 1998).

On an organizational scale, culture is frequently shaped by stories and myths (Buttler, 2012, Denning, 2005). Savvy executives may even create stories around themselves to move an organization in a desired direction (Auvinen, 2013, Denning, 2006). IS opens new opportunities to

convey stories within an organization as well as to customers and partners. For example, video stories that facilitate seeing and hearing the storyteller can add weight and detail to the story, as can visuals about the environment in which the story occurred (Swap, 2001).

Stories have long been used in software development projects to capture requirements and to gather user feedback on them, e.g. in use cases and scenarios (Weidenhaupt, 1998, Paetsch, 2003), sometimes linked to specific personas (Haikara, 2007). These applications use the narrative aspects of storytelling to assure a coherent description of usage behavior. While such impoverished versions of storytelling are normally not included in the storytelling research discourse, there are other researchers who use the full richness of stories to engage with users in the software development process and thus contribute to and benefit from the storytelling scientific discourse. For example storytelling can be used in an outsourcing context to build and maintain a relationship between supplier and client members (Wende, 2014).

With this special issue we want to contribute to the above delineated discourse of stories and storytelling in organisations enabled by IS or used to promote IS development and usage. We are looking for papers from any scientific mode of enquiry, i.e. exploratory, experimental, theoretical and engineering papers. Papers should have a clear relationship to IS.

Topics that might be addressed in the special issue include but are not limited to:

- Definitions of storytelling in the workplace or other organizational settings relevant to IS. What are the current applications of storytelling in IS?
- Empirical studies into the significance of informal storytelling in IS. Storytelling as a naturally occurring phenomenon and its importance for organizational knowledge sharing.
- Stories as sense making, as narratives which enact or re-create realities
- The significance of storytelling as a knowledge management tool. Storytelling as a means of disseminating organizational culture or transmitting values.
- Storytelling for fostering collaboration and in collaborative problem solving. How and when to deploy storytelling in IS projects?
- Storytelling in IS-induced organizational change. How storytelling can spark action, evoke a vision and lead people into the future.
- The use of metaphors in telling stories about IS. Which metaphors are used and how do they contribute to IS projects?
- How the adoption of storytelling is influencing or changing knowledge exchange in IS.
- The influence of media choice on the effectiveness of storytelling.
- Novel or new uses of storytelling in IS.

Submissions should:

1. Explain how they meet the Special Issue objectives.
2. Be innovative in their contribution to IS theory and practice.
3. Ideally be generalisable to a broad and/or prevalent range of contexts.
4. Meet criterion for reporting completeness, structure and research rigor required for ISJ.
5. Should not be research in progress papers.

Deadlines:

Extended Abstracts deadline: October 1st 2016 (optional, but encouraged)

Submission due date: March 1st 2017

1st round reviews: September 1st 2017

1st round revisions: December 1st 2017

2nd round reviews: June 1st 2018

Final revisions: September 1st 2018

Expected publication: 2019

Special Issue Associated Editors (confirmed, other inquiries still pending):

Mike Hine, Information Systems Sprott School of Business Carleton University, Canada

Dirk Hovorka, University of Sydney Business School, Australia

Eleni Lioliou, Loughborough University, UK

Lene Nielsen, IT University Copenhagen, Denmark

Marjolein van Offenbeek, University of Groningen, Netherlands

Ilan Oshri, Loughborough University, UK

Mari-Klara Stein, Copenhagen Business School, Denmark

Dragos Vieru, TÉLUQ Université , Canada

ADAVAL, R. & WYER, R. S. 1998. The Role of Narratives in Consumer Information Processing. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 7, 207-245.

AUVINEN, T. P., ET AL. 2013. Leadership Manipulation and Ethics in Storytelling. *Journal of business ethics*, 116, 415-431.

BARKER, R. T., & GOWER, K. 2010. Strategic application of storytelling in organizations toward effective communication in a diverse world. *Journal of Business Communication*, 47, 295-312.

BUTTLER, T., & LUKOSCH, S. 2012. Exploring the Use of Stories in Patterns of Collaboration. *System Science (HICSS)*, 2012 45th Hawaii International Conference 392-401.

DENNING, S. 2005. *The leader's guide to storytelling: Mastering the art and discipline of business narrative.*, New Jersey, John Wiley & Sons.

DENNING, S. 2006. Effective storytelling: strategic business narrative techniques. *Strategy & Leadership*, 34, 42-48.

- ERLACH, C., AND KARIN THIER 2003. Narratives Wissensmanagement: mit Story Telling unternehmenskulturelles Wissen dokumentieren und verbreiten. *Wissensmanagement*.
- FREIDUS, N., & HLUBINKA, M. 2002. Digital storytelling for reflective practice in communities of learners. *ACM SIGGROUP Bulletin*, 23, 24-26.
- FROHLICH, D. M., RACHOVIDES, D., RIGA, K., BHAT, R., FRANK, M., EDIRISINGHE, E., & HARWOOD, W. StoryBank: mobile digital storytelling in a development context. SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems 2009. ACM, 1761-1770.
- GERSHON, N., AND WARD PAGE 2001. What storytelling can do for information visualization. *Communications of the ACM*, 44, 31-37.
- HAGHIRIAN, P. & CHINI, T. C. 2003. Storytelling: Transferring tacit corporate knowledge in different cultures. *Second annual Euram Conference*.
- HAIKARA, J. 2007. Usability in agile software development: extending the interaction design process with personas approach. *Agile processes in software engineering and extreme programming*. Berlin: Springer.
- HAYNE, S. 2009. Using Storytelling to Enhance Information Systems Knowledge Transfer. In: HACKNEY, R. (ed.) *ISOneWorld*. Las Vegas.
- LEBLANC, S. M. & HOGG, J. 2006. Storytelling in Knowledge Management: An Effective Tool for Uncovering Tacit Knowledge. *Currents 2006 Proceedings STC Atlanta Chapter*, 9.
- MEYER, E., CONNELL, C. & KLEIN, J. H. 2005. A Narrative Approach to Knowledge Exchange: An Empirical Investigation in Two Contrasting Settings. In: SCHREYOEGG, G. & KOCH, J. (eds.) *Knowledge Management and Narratives*. Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag.
- MORGAN, S., & DENNEHY, R. F. 1997. The power of organizational storytelling: a management development perspective. *Journal of Management Development*, 16, 494-501.
- NIELSEN, L., & MADSEN, S. 2006. Storytelling as method for sharing knowledge across IT projects. *System Sciences, HICSS'06. Proceedings of the 39th Annual Hawaii International Conference.*, 8.
- OAKS, T. D. 1996. Storytelling: A natural mnemonic. A study of a storytelling teaching method to positively influence student recall of instruction. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, A57, 579.
- PAETSCH, F., EBERLEIN, A., & MAURER, F. 2003. Requirements Engineering and Agile Software Development. *IEEE*, 308.
- PAPADIMITRIOU, C. 2003. MythematiCS: in praise of storytelling in the teaching of computer science and math. *ACM SIGCSE Bulletin*, 35.
- SCHREYOGG, G. K., JOCHEN. (ed.) 2005. *Knowledge Management and Narratives: Organizational Effectiveness Through Storytelling*, Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag.
- SWAP, W., DOROTHY LEONARD, AND LISA ABRAMS MIMI SHIELDS. 2001. Using mentoring and storytelling to transfer knowledge in the workplace. *Journal of management information systems*, 18, 95-114.
- UITTENBOGAARD, A. 2013. Storytelling for Software Professionals. *Software, IEEE* 30, 9-12.
- WEIDENHAUPT, K., ET AL. 1998. Scenarios in system development: current practice. *Software, IEEE* 15, 34-45.
- WENDE, E., KING, G., SCHWABE, G. 2014. Exploring Storytelling as a Knowledge Transfer Technique in Offshore Outsourcing. *International Conference on Information Systems*. Auckland, New Zealand.

- WHYTE, G., & RALAKE, M. 2013. An Investigation into the Effectiveness of Storytelling as Means of Sharing Tacit Knowledge. *Proceedings of The 4th International Conference on Information Systems Management and Evaluation ICIME 2013*, 39.
- YANG, C. C. 2013. Telling tales at work: An evolutionary explanation. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 1080569913480023.