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Preface

The main objective of this year's "Very Large Business Applications" research track on the 18th SAP Academic Conference EMEA 2013 was to provide researchers and practitioners a forum to present and discuss the most recent innovations, trends, results, experiences and concerns in the several perspectives of Very Large Business Applications (VLBA) and their related technologies.

The definition of a VLBA builds upon the definition of business applications, which are applications implementing processes for value creation in organizations, but exhibits the following specific characteristics. VLBA have no geographical, organizational, cultural or technical limitations. They may be implemented as business application(s) as well as whole systems and system landscapes. VLBAs are of strategic importance to the organization because a change in the VLBA leads to high financial, personnel, and organizational costs.

The interdisciplinary approach is essential to improve both efficiency and quality of business information systems' development and, the underlying business processes they support. Expected benefits of the CVLBAs' research output comprise improvements in the management of the deployment process, increased user satisfaction, and the delivery of enhanced functionality to the market with regard to software and related products. In the context of this broad range of research areas, the following contributions focusing on:

- **Stakeholder Relationship**
  Managing stakeholder relationship deals with internal and external contacts of an organization. The stakeholders' requirements and perception of information and communication systems determine the development and operation of these systems. In terms of process orientation, the material and immaterial relationships between an organization and its stakeholders can be differentiated into input (e. g. retrieval of knowledge and information for added value) and output (e. g. reporting to stakeholders).
- **Life cycle of Information and Communication Systems**
  Like physical products, information and communication systems have a specific life cycle. It comprises not only the development and operation of these systems but also their disposal (or replacement).
- **Continuous Improvement**
  The aspect of information and communication systems' life cycle management is often misinterpreted in literature. Continuous improvement is not the development of systems with an endless life time. It is the improvement of the process to manage information and communication systems and services continuously.

- **Sustainability of Information and Communication Systems**
  The sustainability of information and communication systems and services becomes increasingly important. The sustainable development of these systems can have positive effects (e. g. improved understanding and efficiency in working with these systems).
- **Performance**
  Beside the pure existence of information and communication systems, the continuous improvement of their processes during their life cycle. There is also the question how the performance of Very Large Business Application systems can be modeled, evaluated and improved. Especially the implementation of new in-memory database technologies is highly relevant in the context of VLBA research.

The VLBA research track on the 18th Annual SAP Academic Conference EMEA 2013 in Munich helped researchers and practitioners to discuss the latest strategies, tactics and operational policies for Very Large Business Applications such as enterprise resource planning (ERP), customer relationship management (CRM) and supply chain management (SCM) and their implications on organizational competitiveness. Design, development and implementation issues of VLBA including ERP and other forms were discussed.

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