

1st International Workshop on E-mails in E-commerce and Enterprise Context (E3C)

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The 1st International Workshop on Email in e-Commerce and Enterprise Contexts (E3C) was held on July 20th 2009 at the 11th IEEE Conference on Commerce and Enterprise Computing (CEC 2009) in Vienna, Austria. The E3C workshop brought together email and enterprise computing researchers and practitioners to present recent email research, software prototypes and to discuss the role and potential of email communication in e-commerce and enterprise contexts.

Despite the rise of competing technologies, email remains a crucial business communication tool and an important source of enterprise information and knowledge. According to recent surveys, (i) information workers spend an average of 20% of their time dealing with email [1], and (ii) about 80% of users prefer email as a business communication tool [2].

In Europe, about 98.8% of enterprises are SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises). With an average of 7 employees per SME [3], email is widely used by SMEs to manage tasks and cooperation in conducting their business. Web 2.0 and e-commerce systems also rely on email for notifying users about transactions, changes, services or events.

Email is used for many functions, including alerting, archiving, task management, collaboration and interoperability. Partly due to this diversity of use, email is rarely a standalone information source. Email messages often contain pointers to files (e.g., saved attachments), links to resources and services on the Web, and references to other people. Email communication also interconnects business transactions with human communication, collaboration and interaction, thus providing a rich source of information for social and business-oriented computing.

Existing email research has focused largely on topics such as understanding social aspects of email, email task management and user interaction with email. There has been little interaction between email research and work on enterprise computing which considers information from various legacy systems, business Web services, business process templates and documents. To effectively exploit the capability of email in e-commerce and enterprise contexts, in particular for SMEs, we foresaw the need to join efforts from these different research communities to identify issues and share research results.

The aim of this workshop was to gather email and enterprise computing researchers and practitioners to discuss and propose solutions for email in e-commerce and enterprise contexts. The event at E3C built on previous successful events including the recent Workshop on Enhanced Messaging (EMAIL-2008) at AAAI-08.

Outcomes

The call for papers solicited original email research papers and demonstration submissions. In total, the workshop received six submissions: four full papers and two demonstrations. Each paper was independently peer reviewed by at least four members of the international program committee. Four papers were accepted:

Two full papers:

1. *Uwe Riss, Marlen Jurisch*: Email in Semantic Task Management
2. *Michal Laclavik, Diana Maynard*: Motivating intelligent email in business: an investigation into current trends for email processing and communication research

Two demonstration papers:

3. *Simon Scerri, Brian Davis, Siegfried Handschuh*: Semanta – Supporting Email Workflows in Business Processes
4. *Thomas Burkhart, Dirk Werth, Peter Loos*: Community-based Interoperability Utility for SMEs – An introduction of the Commius prototype

The first paper discusses semantic task management tools and approaches and their integration within the email environment. It also presents a user evaluation.

The second paper reviews the state of the art in email-related research. It surveys both commercial and research prototype software and approaches, and discusses possible future research directions.

The third paper presents a demonstration of Semanta – a Semantic Email prototype integrated within existing email clients that attempts to recognise and support specific email workflows in email messages.

The final paper presents Commius – a prototype that focuses on enterprise interoperability using email communication; providing process detection, tracking, assistance, and advising functionality.

Email communication remains a widely used and accepted means for collaboration, work management, information notification and sharing in enterprise contexts. The workshop's accepted submissions discuss the latest research and approaches that attempt to address existing limitations of email in such contexts. We feel that events like the E3C workshop serve also to stimulate research interest and foster interaction between research communities, in order to achieve higher quality research results for the analysis and improvement of email communication within e-commerce and enterprises.

We would like to thank all authors who submitted papers and all workshop participants for their valuable contributions. We are also grateful to our program committee members for the time and effort they contributed in reviewing the papers.

References

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