

OSWC 2012 Call

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Call for Papers: Organization Science Winter Conference XVIII on 'Formal Organizations Meet Social Networking'

<http://www.informs.org/Pubs/OrgSci/News/Organization-Science-Winter-Conference>

November 28, 2011 at 9:10 AM

We are very pleased to announce the **Eighteenth Annual Organization Science Winter Conference (OSWCXVIII)**. OSWC-XVIII is sponsored by *Organization Science* in order to stimulate knowledge about organizations through experimentation and boundary-crossing conversation. It combines the leading-edge ideas of strategy and organization scholars, executives, entrepreneurs, and interested non-business scholars, in a community-enhancing setting. The time and place are **February 9 - 12, 2012** at the Sheraton Steamboat Hotel and Conference Center, Steamboat Springs Colorado.

The core theme revolves around the intersection of Formal Organizations and Social Networks. Specifically, how will formal organizations deal with and adapt to the next generation of employees who have grown up embedded in large-scale, ICT-enabled social networks? What will be the impact on, organization structures, decision making, organization culture, routines, etc. when self organizing processes will of necessity substitute for traditional top down by the book management?

There is a growing body of research and practice that touches on the proposed theme. Virtual organizations is an umbrella concept that encompasses research on groups of individuals whose members and resources may be distributed geographically and structurally who function as a coherent unit through the utilization of collaborative technologies. Virtual organizations include distributed workgroups, virtual teams, online communities or collaboratories. Virtual organizations often organize around flexible and resilient structures in contrast to pre-determined hierarchical structures. Within business organizations, understanding virtual organizations and more recently transforming hierarchical organizations to function as an intra social network represents a new reality. The early drivers involve the recognition that it is becoming increasingly rare that employees in the same department or unit work in a single location. Employees working together across different locations require special coordination routines, expertise and problem solving capabilities. This trend to more virtual distributed structures in business organizations is now being joined by companies implementing social networking structures and processes in part as a response to pressure from new entrants steeped in social networking. This is likely to require adopting processes for searching information and arriving at decisions that are outcomes of self organizing processes more akin to interactions in social networks.

On the periphery of the formal organizations experience has accumulated with large-scale, ICT-enabled social networks or online communities operating outside the boundaries of formal organizations. As a practical matter, some formal organizations found it necessary to find an accommodation with, for example, open source software communities. Companies have had to address questions of customer defection, loss of control over intellectual property, employee contribution to these efforts, etc. Organization science scholars have studied open source software communities and the movement of innovative activity to the edges of organizations and into communities.

Especially surprising are leading edge companies which have implemented companywide social networking tools such as Chatter (by salesforce.com). Dell for example has released Chatter to its entire workforce of over 100K employees. Turner Broadcasting is in the process of implementing another social networking tool throughout the organization. Similarly Cisco has also such an initiative underway involving a new model, the Dynamic Networked Organization (DNO). All three companies claim that they had to leapfrog into this "new world" in response to pressure from new employees. Undoubtedly these companies and other early adopters experience many instances of unanticipated outcomes and discover daily challenges affecting middle and senior managers as they adjust to an emerging managerial practice anchored in the self organizing processes of intra social networks.

It is all together clear that the phenomenon involving the intersection of the formal organization and social networking is underway with major implications for interdisciplinary organization science scholarship.

In the tradition of OSWC, we invite 2-3 page proposals for plenary panels and interactive poster papers on the theme of the conference. If you are interested in attending **OSWC XVIII** but not as participant on the program please submit a statement expressing your desire to participate and describing your interest in the intersection of formal organizations and social networking. The application deadline for proposals or individual applications to attend is **November 4, 2011**. **(Proposals or individual applications can still be submitted even if the application deadline has passed)**

As has been the case in the past, much of the plenary program is created from proposals and suggestions received from scholars wishing to participate in OSWC. Most authors will be invited to join another highly acclaimed OSWC tradition—the open-ended evening-long (7–10pm) **Interactive Poster Sessions** accompanied with finger food, wine, soft drinks and desserts. Historically, **50% of the OSWC attendee roster is reserved for participants new to the conference**. Invitations to attend will be extended by the program committee for **OSWC-XVIII, Janet Fulk, Arie Lewin, Lee Sproull and Tony O'Driscoll**. Panel proposals, posters and statement of interest in participation should be uploaded to the submission website at <https://www.fuquaworld.duke.edu/open/fsc/OrgSciConfForm.html>.

Conference registration and information on registering for the preconference will be available soon through the INFORMS website. Register by January 13th, 2012, to take advantage of the early registration fee for members of \$525. Pre-conference registration fee is set at \$45.

Individuals having substantive questions are invited to contact the program co-chairs for **OSWC-XVIII**: Janet Fulk (fulk@usc.edu); Arie Lewin (ayl3@duke.edu); Tony O'Driscoll (to15@duke.edu); or Lee Sproull (lspruall@stern.nyu.edu).

The co-conveners of OSWC XVIII are Professor Dan Levinthal (Levinthal@wharton.upenn.edu), the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, and Professor Linda Argote (argote@cmu.edu), Tepper School of Business, Carnegie Mellon University.

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