

## Mini Track: Virtual Work, Teams, And Organizations

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The push and pull provided by information technology and rapidly changing business demands have led to virtual work becoming increasingly important in organizations. Virtual work can take various forms, from geographically distributed teams to telecommuting to global project development teams. In virtual organizations and communities, individuals can become part of groups and/or organizations that have no physical colocation, and often do not meet each other, except for virtual encounters. Increasing globalization, heightened security awareness, and tightening traveling budgets are all factors that will foster even further growth for virtual environments.

Managing, working, and living in this information-rich and rapidly changing environment presents a major challenge. This mini-track focuses on issues related to challenges presented by and effectiveness of virtual work, teams, organizations, and communities. While the explosion of communication technologies has facilitated the growth of virtual environments, it has also resulted in confusion over choice of communication technologies that may be appropriate for a particular task, overload of information to be sorted through, and a sense of isolation from coworkers. In addition, teams must be formed and become productive quickly, e.g., competitive advantage for project development teams is frequently based on being able to bring new product to market more quickly than competitors. Consequently, these teams must rapidly form and execute in response to customer needs. This environment is further complicated as individual members may work in multiple virtual teams with multiple, often conflicting priorities. These teams can be composed of members from different functional areas as well as different organizations. In virtual environments, managing these different relationships, loyalties, and priorities, in

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addition to developing new relationships, presents a definite challenge.

This mini-track is a forum for exploring challenges presented by geographical, temporal, and cultural distribution among individuals working in teams, organizations, and communities. We sought papers addressing these issues from an organizational, managerial, team, community, or individual perspective. We were also interested in enabling technologies and their use in this environment. We accepted six papers that will be presented at HICSS 37.

The paper by Hung, Dennis, and Robert addresses the development of trust in virtual teams. Corbitt, Gardiner, and Wright also explore trust by comparing virtual with face-to-face (FTF) teams. Addressing an increasingly important but little researched area, Espinosa and Carmel investigate difficulties of coordinating across time zones in global software development. Balthazard, Waldman, Howell, and Atwater compare shared leadership in virtual teams vs. face-to-face teams. Integrating social psychology theory with previous empirical studies of telecommuting, Neufeld and Fang develop a framework to examine factors influencing telecommuter productivity. Swan, Belanger, and Watson-Manheim address why workers choose not to participate in distributed work arrangements by developing a multi-level, incentive theories-based framework.