

Call for Papers

The 6th International Workshop on Organisational Semiotics

Virtual, distributed and flexible organisations
11 - 12 July 2003, Reading, UK

Organisational Semiotics, a branch of semiotics, focuses on the nature, characteristics and behaviour of signs. The term Organisational Semiotics (hereafter OS) was officially coined in the first international workshop in Twente in 1995 after a long time of research by colleagues who have worked in the many fields of organisational studies and information systems. OS opens up new ways of understanding the functioning of information and information resources in organised behaviour. It treats organisations as the real information systems in which technologies have an essential role to play. It develops this perspective using the established discipline of semiotics, the theory of signs. The fundamental notion of sign - anything that stands for something else with a certain community - offers a handle for in-depth study of human and technical aspects of information systems.

The OS community aims to meet annually by running the OS workshops. The community has been fortunate in receiving support and recognition from IFIP (the International Federation of Information Processing). In 2001, the IFIP WG 8.1 held a working conference in Montreal 2001 entitled "Organisational Semiotics - Evolving a Science of Information Systems", which reflects the ambition of establishing a new discipline by the OS research community. The table below summarises the meetings held in the past years.

No.	Type of event	Host/venue	Year	Deliverables
1st	International workshop	University of Twente, Enschede (NL)	1995	Proceedings
2 nd	International workshop	University of Twente, Almelo (NL)	1999	Book by Kluwer
3 rd	International workshop	Staffordshire University, Stafford (UK),	2000	Book by Kluwer
4 th	IFIP WG8.1 Working Conference	Concordia University, Montreal (Canada)	2001	IFIP official conference proceedings (book)
5 th	International workshop	Groningen University and Delft University, Delft (NL)	2002	Book by Kluwer (to appear)

This workshop in 2003 will continue the effort of an international research community in the development of a new discipline of organisational semiotics (OS). It will focus not only on the theory-building, but also on practical benefits gained so far through application of methods and techniques derived from various OS approaches.

Paper submission in the following, but not restricted, topics will be welcome:

- Semiotic analysis of the nature of virtuality and virtual organisations
- Co-design of business and IT systems for distributed and flexible organisations

- Organisational behaviour and changes based on developing semiotic entities like models, plans, norms and designs
- Modelling and simulation in organisational understanding, organisational re-design, process re-engineering and change analysis
- Legacy systems re-engineering and integration of IT and business systems,
- Interaction between semiotic and material processes in organisations
- Actability and transparency in information systems: under which conditions will system behavior be interpretable to users and support proper actions?
- Interface design and the division of labor in organizations: who needs to access to what information?
- Pervasive computing: designing an environment of computer based signs. Physical space as the new interface to information systems. .

The papers will be peer reviewed. Both papers of a theoretical nature and papers that discuss historical and empirical research are welcomed. Full paper submission must reach the conference secretary in a Word file by the 15th March 2003. We intend to publish selected papers in a post conference book as previous workshops.

Important dates

Full paper submission: 15 March 2003, in Word

Notification of acceptance: 1 May 2003

Camera-ready version: 1 June

Workshop: 11-12 July, 2003

Programme Committee

Ke Cheng Liu (chair) – The University of Reading, United Kingdom

Peter Andersen, Aalborg University, Denmark

Cecilia Baranauskas, UNICAMP, Brazil

Rodney Clarke, Staffordshire University, United Kingdom

Joaquim Filipe, Escola Superior de Tecnologia de Setubal, Portugal

Henk Gazendam, Groningen University and Twente University, The Netherlands

Göran Goldkuhl, Linköping University, Sweden

René Jorna, University of Groningen, The Netherlands

Ronald Stamper, University of Twente, The Netherlands

Workshop Secretary: Steven Xie (z.xie@reading.ac.uk)

The workshop website, where you can also find information on past workshops/meetings of Organisational Semiotics and on how to order OS books, is:

<http://www.cs.rdg.ac.uk/ais/workshop>