Competitive Renaissance through Digital Transformation
(Third Edition)

Pavia (IT), 18-19th February 2021

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- Riccardo Resciniti, Università del Sannio (IT)
- Roger Strange, University of Sussex (UK)
- Diego Matricano, Università degli Studi della Campania "L. Vanvitelli" (IT)

Keynote speakers

- Erkko Autio, Imperial College London (UK)
- Alfredo De Massis, Free University of Bozen-Bolzano (IT)
- Ernesto Ciorra, Head of Innovability – ENEL
- Alessandro La Volpe, Vice President Cloud & Cognitive Software – IBM

Conference Theme

The term Renaissance – 'rebirth' - refers to a period in Europe between the 14th and 17th centuries well known for an extraordinary production of creativity, art and literature. Grounded in renewed attentiveness to human potential, it marked the emergence from the "dark ages." On the heels of one of the great "disruptive innovations" of all time, the printing press, the Renaissance witnessed a *renaissance of science*, punctuated by the discovery and exploration of new continents, the growth of commerce – also across countries - the Copernican revolution and a renewed interest in science and discovery.

A few centuries later, the worldwide challenges posed by economic, environmental, societal and-health-related conditions are calling governments and organizations to act with urgency. Nations, companies, and ecosystems need to rethink and re-build their competitiveness to address the enormous challenges they are faced with (McKinsey, 2020). While the Renaissance emphasized the magnificence of human potential, a *'new renaissance'* of the Italian and European system must leverage digital technology to 'augment' human talent and organizational capabilities.

Given the existential challenges posed by climate change, special attention goes to the interplay between technological innovation, globalization, and environmental sustainability. Doing business through digital and sustainable processes opens novel opportunities and poses additional challenges to firms who have an international presence and/or are part of complex value chains, often spanning national borders.

Given this background, we call for research papers contributing to the debate on how digital technologies can enable a sustainable renaissance of organizations' competitiveness, considering both SMEs and larger corporations, as well as a new wave of entrepreneurs. We encourage the submission of papers aiming to contribute to a wide range of topics such as (but not limited to):

- Ontology of digital resources, artefacts and technologies;
- Digital technology as a driver for entrepreneurship and competitiveness in a post-COVID-19 world;
- Emerging technologies (e.g. artificial intelligence), new ventures and business model innovation;
- Creation and appropriation of value in the algorithmic economy;
- Competition in digital platforms and ecosystems;
- Relationship between digital innovation, entrepreneurship and environmental sustainability;
- Relationship between digital transformation and international business;
- Industry 4.0, additive manufacturing and new configuration of global factories;
- Digitalization of services, unified commerce and the 'rebirth' of retail.

The conference is organized around three tracks:

1. *Conference Theme Track;*
2. *SMEs, Resilience, and Digital Transformation Track;*
3. *Digital Innovation and Sustainable Renaissance Track.*

We intend for the conference to be held physically, while ensuring the highest standard of health safety. We remain flexible as needed and we'll consider moving to an online and/or "blended" approach as needed).

Connecting academic research with the management practice agenda

Many have lamented the disconnect between academic research and practice. Yet, academics should have the market cornered when it comes to anticipating the questions strategists and managers grapple with – particularly in times of upheaval. Much of our professional life is spent studying theoretical phenomena and attempting to push forward our own and our colleagues' understanding of the phenomena we study. When this background is brought to bear on timely topics of interest to executives, academics can serve as the leading edge of the reinsurance spear. But this objective can only be achieved by engaging deeply with executives. We want to lead in this effort and invite papers that bridge the gap between academia and practice. We take inspiration from the goals and aims of the MIS Quarterly Executive[1] and will implement the following innovations:

a) Each paper must have two abstracts. Each one should be self-standing and readable independently. The first one is a traditional academic abstract. The second one is a 'practice-oriented' version highlighting managerial implications and recommendations for practitioners stemming from the paper's findings. The second abstract will be evaluated by a panel of top managers from leading companies.

b) Every parallel session will showcase 3 presentations from scholar-lead teams and 1 presentation from a practitioner lead paper. Such design seeks cross-pollination of ideas from both communities.

c) Authors of papers that have the potential to offer actionable, timely and clear recommendations to executives and receive strong endorsements for their practice oriented abstracts, will be invited to submit to the *MIS Quarterly Executive*.

Publication opportunities and Awards

The conference is in partnership with the following journals and related publication opportunities:

- **European Management Journal - Management Focus Section**, tentatively published by end of 2021;[2]
- **MIS Quarterly Executive - Special Section** on the theme of the conference for qualifying invited papers.
- **Technovation - Special Issue,** tentatively published by the end of 2021.
- **Technology Analysis & Strategic Management - Special Issue** on investigating predictors, outcomes, and dynamics of technology-driven processes addressed by young innovative companies.

A best paper award will be granted by a jury consisting of both scholars and practitioners. The Conference Best Paper Award will be awarded at the conference. A networking session with Editors will be held.

Furthermore, three selected contributions will have the opportunity to be adapted and published as articles in the magazine **Wired**. The goal is to give visibility, also outside the scientific community, to the best outcomes of the conference.

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[1] Such aims and efforts are detailed in the editorials freely available at the following addresses:
https://aisel.aisnet.org/misqe/vol18/iss1/1/ ; https://aisel.aisnet.org/misqe/vol18/iss2/1/;
https://aisel.aisnet.org/misqe/vol18/iss3/1/; https://aisel.aisnet.org/misqe/vol19/iss1/1/
[2] A 'Management Focus section' in EMJ is similar to a special issue, but it consists of about 3-4 contributions, plus an editorial embedded, in a regular issue.

Venue and hospitality

The conference will take place in the University of Pavia - Pavia (IT). A list of accommodations offering special rates is available on the conference web page (accomodation): http://digitaltransfconference.unipv.it/

Roadmap and deadlines

Steps	Date / Deadlines	Relevant info
1. Paper submission (extended abstract also accepted)	No later than Dec 22th 2020	Contributions must be sent via this web link. Both full papers (in the range of 6,000-10,000 words) and extended abstract (in the range of 3,000-5,000 words) are welcomed, though only full articles will be eligible for the best paper award. Besides the manuscript, two abstracts are required: I. Traditional one: max 1200 characters, to be evaluated by scholars, 70% of the valuation; II. Practice-oriented one highlights managerial implications: max 700 characters, to be evaluated by a practitioner, 30% of the valuation. The two abstracts can be very different or very similar depending on the authors' free decision. There are no other submission guidelines.
2. Notification of paper acceptance	No later than Jan 10th 2020	Authors whose papers have been accepted for presentation at the conference will be notified by January 10th 2020. The selection is based on the valuation of three reviewers: two of them come from academia (70% of the valuation), whilst one reviewer will be a practitioner, i.e. manager or senior consultant (30% of the valuation). Evaluation criteria: ● Theoretical contribution; ● Managerial contribution / implications for policy makers; ● Soundness of the methodology; ● Consistency with conference theme.
3. Conference Registration	No later than Jan 20th 2021	To register for the Conference all the attendees have to: 1. register at this web link; 2. pay a fee of Euros 100,00. No extensions on the conference fee payment will be allowed. The conference fee will be paid to the SIMA by using the following bank details: *Società Italiana di Management* *Bank: Unicredit, Agenzia 149* *IBAN: IT 10 S 02008 05089 000103056784* *Reason: - Registration for COMPETITIVE RENAISSANCE THROUGH DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION - UNIPV*
4. Conference	18-19th Feb 2021, Pavia (IT)	● DAY1 (Thurs 18th Feb): 17:00 - Plenary, then dinner at 19:30; ● DAY2 (Fri 19th Feb): from 9:00 to 16:00 - Parallel Sessions, Meet the Editors session, Closing Speech and Concluding Remarks. The detailed schedule will be available on the conference website

Contact and Conference Website

Email: digitaltransformation@unipv.it
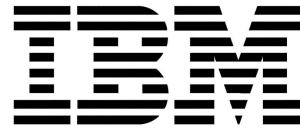
Website: http://digitaltransfconference.unipv.it/

Looking forward to see you in Pavia,

The Conference Organizers

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Partners

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