

Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

One of the most profound consequences of the ongoing information revolution is its influence on how economic value is created and extracted. The new information infrastructure redefines business relationships and allows for a separation of the information about a product or service from the product or service itself. The information about products, made available by Electronic Product Catalogs (EPC), exceeds by far what hitherto is familiar with conventional catalogs, be they paper based or mirrored electronically.

The global information infrastructure and its current incarnation – the Internet – has the inherent potential of enabling a global marketplace, to which Electronic Product Catalogs form the Web-based front-end. Electronic Product Catalogs also provide a virtual gateway to a company through which customers obtain product information, order goods and services, make payments, access customer support, provide feedback, and participate in other corporate activities, regardless of the time of day or the customers' whereabouts.

The present issue includes a mix of articles dealing with Electronic Product Catalogs. After outlining the general situation, identifying what has been achieved and what is still missing, a number of articles look at various aspects, such as technical hurdles, methods adopted for semantically integrating product information, and already available applications of Electronic Product Catalogs.

Many thanks to all participating authors. We, the editorial team of Electronic Markets, enjoy to work closely with the authors to bring together views on specific subjects such as the above mentioned. We would be glad to receive your feedback on the recent developments of the journal and invite you to visit our Website at <http://www.electronicmarkets.com> to do so. The site also provides a large archive section and a discussion forum for authors and readers alike.

This is the third issue of the journal in its new outfit and editorial concept. Major changes have been implemented successfully over the last months and some are still to come (review board, extended Web coverage, etc.) The journal has seen a steady growth of subscriptions over the last months. Until now, the journal has been distributed for free. To cover some of the costs of producing and distributing the journal we will need to increase subscription revenues over the next months. Please subscribe now, using the form at the end of the journal or alternatively the Web-based form. Thank you.



Beat F. Schmid
Editor-in-Chief



Dorian Selz



Regine Sing



Yves Gadient

In return you will continue to receive a journal that makes essential reading for anyone involved with Electronic Commerce, covering aspects such as the development and deployment of Electronic Commerce applications, academic issues, technological aspects, inter-organizational systems, EDI, and much more.

Yours sincerely,
The Editorial Team