

principles from the BAT model: two actors (customer and supplier) and four phases of exchange actions. E-business, especially in B2C settings, usually means a supplier sets up a Web site where customers can search for products and place orders. The supplier is the one who mediates the business actions, both supplier's actions and customer actions. The Web site is the way, or at least one way, for the supplier to perform certain business actions. Giving offers and order receipts may be performed through the Web site. This is case a in Figure 3, where the supplier, through controlling the IT mediation, has great influence on the business interaction.

It is not common, but there are occasionally cases in which customers have a Web site or some other IT application that serves as a mediator for business interaction with its suppliers. There are situations in B2B or business-to-government (B2G) where such cases exist (case b in Figure 3). A powerful customer is the one who, through control of the IT mediator, has great influence on the way business interaction is performed.

In B2B settings, where a supplier and a customer have a dense relation with many business transactions, they will perhaps create a specific IT application together, through which they can interact (case c in Figure 3). This was often the case in traditional EDI, but can also be performed through Web technology. The IT mediation of business interaction will be arranged through a joint design and negotiation process between the two business parties. There will be a combined customer and supplier control. One of the parties can of course be more active in the design and implementation process.

In some situations, customers and suppliers interact through an electronic marketplace. A separate IT application, run by an independent third party, is used for interaction. In this case, (d in Figure 3), neither the customer nor the supplier will have control of the IT mediation [11].

In Figure 3, the IT media covers all four phases of the business interaction. This will not be the case for all types of transactions. Product delivery (in the fulfillment phase) will only be possible to be mediated if the product is in a digital format, otherwise there must be a physical distribution. Invoicing and payment will, however, often be performed through IT-mediated services. The BAT model can support an analysis of the coverage of IT media in the business interaction. Which actions, in what business phases, should be supported by which media? (See [7].) The positioning of the IT media, illustrated through the four cases in Figure 3, is thus critical. The BAT model gives support for this kind of analysis.

CONCLUSION

The actions in coordination are emphasized in LAP, encouraging investigators to focus on intentions, expectations, and commitments in communication. This is crucial in designing software to support both intraorganizational and interorganizational coordination. LAP has contributed to several models for investigating, modeling, and designing organizational coordination. In order to be useful, such an approach should give guidance to a co-design of business interaction and its supportive software. The BAT model gives assistance in positioning the IT media in relation to business parties and in different business phases. The BAT model has been applied in many studies since the mid-1990s and has proven to be useful [8]. Existing business processes have been evaluated, while new ways and modes of interaction have been co-designed. ■

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