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Smart cities and operations management

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ABSTRACT This editorial article provides an overview of the scope, aims and objectives of the SI. It also outlines the key categorising themes which have been used to organise the eight papers selected for publication.

ARTICLE HISTORY Received 15 December 2015 Accepted 19 January 2016 KEYWORDS Last mile freight; enterprise systems in a future city; retailing in the smart city; new operational models and frameworks

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The aim of this SI was to go beyond the usual town planning scope of a smart city to actually uncover what this would mean if such initiatives were to be implemented at a process level with PPC solutions. The smart city idea we adopt is that of a focus in production and consumption, moving from global to local; manufacturing from competitive to collaborative; and business from a shareholder to a multiple-stakeholder point of view. The eight papers meet our objective which was to theoretically advance the PPC discourse and provide more operational-level insights for smart city practitioners. We had a healthy number of 15 original submissions and these were reduced down to a final eight papers which met the high quality and editorial requirements of PPC.

The eight papers have been organised into three distinct categories. First, there are three papers by Bonilla; Montoya Torres et al. and Harrington et al. These have as their primary unit of analysis the issue of last mile freight. All three papers grapple with the challenging issue of the final movement of goods in the city to end consumption points. There is a common theme across all three papers, which is the need for more collaborative and stakeholder approaches to freight and transport optimisation. They also call for a change in philosophy from profit-centricity towards a smart city logistics system, which is built more sustainably on economic, operational, resilient and environmental foundations.

A second particular focus which could be found was that of retailing in the smart city. Fletcher et al. take an independent and more social view of the smart city high street. One in which local community stakeholders would have more involvement in the supply chain and retail operations. Using narrative fiction tools, he sets about planning a more socially driven high street configuration with citizen servitisation at the heart of PPC decisions. Furthermore, this citizen centric theme is developed by Burnes and Towers who provide a specific case study of fast fashion.

The third category of papers could be loosely termed as conceptual models, tools and frameworks. The three works by Mehmood and Naim, Li et al. and Oberg and Graham set about building predictive models for the realisation of future city enterprise systems, modelling new operations models in a digital economy (e.g. Uber) and exploring the integration of smart city initiatives in the industrial supply chain.

All three papers set about broadening orthodox PPC operational concepts such as efficiency, optimisation and lead time with economic and social dimensions. These include: digital economic

characteristics, business models, emerging organisational forms, social-technical aspects (such as building new industrial communities and eco-systems), networks and logistics strategies.

A final aim was to attract new scholars outside of the traditional PPC remit to publish within our field and experiment with techno-production concepts in radical and creative ways. We would like to thank the authors for contributing some really unique papers and in helping the guest editor to advance future research agendas and the scope of the PPC discipline to the smart city arena.

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