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Article

New bottles for new wine: Digital transformation demands new policies and strategies

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New bottles for new wine: Digital transformation demands new policies and strategies[☆]

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ABSTRACT

This editorial is an introduction to the special issue for the International Telecommunications Society 24th Biennial Conference (ITS 2024 Seoul). The conference explored and discussed new policies and strategies for effectively coping with the impending challenge of digital transformation. Ninety-nine papers were presented at ITS 2024 Seoul, and following the conference, eleven papers were submitted for the ITS 2024 Seoul special issue. Three of these papers were accepted and included in this special issue. These papers provide significant findings and implications for firms, governments, and societies to cope with the impending challenges of digital transformation effectively. However, since digital transformation demands new policies and strategies, significant additional research is required.

1. Introduction

Digital transformation, which has been accelerated by rapidly advancing artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, has profoundly affected every aspect of people's daily lives. For example, digital content platforms, such as over-the-top (OTT) services, have been reshaping the media industry, and frontier AI models, including ChatGPT, have been transforming how work and business are done across all public and private sectors. Digital transformation does not end with the digital and AI industries; it is also redesigning the medical and healthcare sectors. Indeed, digital transformation is a new driver of growth in the global economy.

As a result of digital transformation, content producers, consumers, and the public have heavily relied on digital platforms (Park & Kim, 2024). With the help of various platforms, we can create content, monitor traffic and congestion, more rapidly develop new materials and vaccines, provide individualized healthcare services, and increase production efficiency. However, the rapid progress in digital transformation also generates economic and technological contests and fragmentations within and among nations. As digital transformation progresses, data's importance is becoming more apparent in all industries because firms are attempting to take the lead by offering personalized services in customers' daily lives. Additionally, it seems impossible to avoid disruptive industrial restructuring entailing job displacement while creating new jobs, a more concentrated market structure, widening income inequality, and increasing cyberattacks, privacy breaches, and violations of human dignity.

Recognizing the new opportunities and threats that will be brought by digital transformation, policymakers and industry leaders must focus on reinventing domestically and harmonizing globally relevant policy

and strategy measures and frameworks. The International Telecommunications Society 24th Biennial Conference (hereafter, ITS 2024 Seoul) was held to explore and discuss new policies and strategies together for effectively coping with the impending challenges of digital transformation. Under the theme, "New bottles for new wine: digital transformation demands new policies and strategies," 99 papers were presented at ITS 2024 Seoul.

2. Overview of the papers in the special issue

This section introduces each of the three papers in the special issue, summarizing their research purposes, findings, and contributions.

After ITS 2024 Seoul, 11 papers were submitted for its special issue, and three papers were accepted after several rounds of reviews. These three papers have a clear link with the central theme of ITS 2024 Seoul. This editorial article provides a summary of the three accepted papers.

The first paper, "Research trends in entertainment robots: A comprehensive review of the literature from 1998 to 2024" by Kang & Kim, 2025, examined the research trends and gaps in the entertainment robot field through a bibliometric analysis of 237 academic works published between 1998 and 2024 and a systematic literature review of 26 non-technical studies published since 2016. They found that most research was conducted from a technical perspective, while the literature review identified a limited understanding of the human-centered aspects of entertainment robots. Accordingly, more research that aligns with industry needs is needed. In particular, future research must address user-centered designs that enhance human-robot interaction in entertainment contexts.

In the next paper, Chou and Lin (2025) explored the marketing effects of social platforms on box office performance in China. This study is

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meaningful because the Chinese movie market is the second-largest market worldwide, and digital advertising accounts for more than 50 % of a film's total expenditure in China. This study found that volume and valence on Maoyan and Douban, two popular, professional platforms for video entertainment, influence gross revenue. This study identified the marketing modes that create blockbusters in China and accordingly offers social platform marketing strategies for major movie studios, including those in Hollywood.

de Ibarreta et al. (2025) examined the impact of banking digitalization in Spain, focusing on the consequences of branch closures and digital barriers on financial inclusion. A logit model with random effects was estimated using survey panel data. They found that a lower density of bank branches per 1000 inhabitants significantly increased the propensity to use e-banking. They also found that structural inequalities persist, despite increasing e-banking adoption, particularly among older adults and rural populations. This study highlights the need for targeted financial education programs, improved digital infrastructure development, and hybrid banking models that ensure accessibility to vulnerable populations.

3. Conclusion

In summary, the numerous papers presented at ITS 2024 Seoul and the three papers selected for this special issue provide significant findings and implications for firms, governments, and societies to effectively cope with the impending challenges of digital transformation. However, since digital transformation demands new policies and strategies, significant additional research is required. We hope that there will be continued research that provides new bottles for new wine in the domain of digital transformation.

Declaration of competing interest

None.

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