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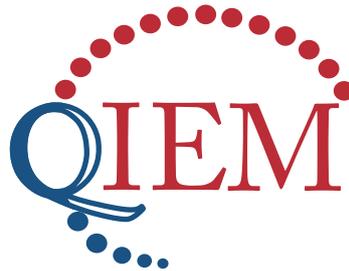
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Dezvoltarea Resurselor Umane 2007-2013



Quality and Innovation in Engineering and Management

Proceedings of The 1st International Conference on Quality and Innovation in Engineering and Management

**Cluj-Napoca
17th - 19th of March**

Editors

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ISBN 978-973-662-614-2

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28 Memorandumului Street, 400114, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

www.utcluj.ro

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FOREWORD

Nowadays, we are living in a world which is challenged from multiple perspectives by the growing need for overall well-being in a globalized economy, under deep cultural interactions and strong demands for committing a sustainable development of organizations, businesses and society in a broader extend. The rapid formation of the knowledge economy and the evident transition from the “information age” to the “conceptual age” create a complex situation with significant impacts on society, politics, science, technology, as well as nations and individuals. These large-scale trends in evolution rise up a new competitive framework, which is known as “conceptual economy”. This paradigm expresses the key contribution of quality, innovation, design and creative skills to economic competitiveness of organizations and nations in the global context. Hence, seeing quality, design and innovation as an integrated concept is the central point for a sustainable development and pace of economic, political, social and cultural globalization.

The QIEM 2011 conference is going to contribute with ideas and solutions to the advancement of new areas of opportunity for the evolving economy. The papers propose, investigate and test new principles, theories, strategies, means and solutions for managers and engineers in approaching business and technical systems in a more effective and efficient way in the forthcoming conceptual economy.

The conference includes 115 scientific papers, organized in 3 track-sessions (quality, innovation, design), two keynote and plenary sessions and one opening address. Over 100 participants are expected to attend the conference. The sessions include contributions on quality and performance management, industrial metrology, quality systems and organizational excellence, sustainable development, product and process innovation, new product development and project management. The integrative approach to quality and innovation is the key characteristic of this conference.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the authors at QIEM 2011 for their good quality research, the members of the international scientific committee for their voluntary support in reviewing the papers and the local organizing committee for their involvement in preparing the conference. We also thank the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca for producing the Proceedings in excellent quality. Finally, we highly appreciate the support of the Department of Machine-Tools and Industrial Robots of the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca who made possible to bring this conference into existence.

Professor Albert WECKENMANN
Chairman
QIEM Conference
2011

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