

Business processes, the missing link in the SDI network?

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Although spatial data access, use and sharing takes place in the network of business processes between and within organisations, little attention has been paid so far to the structural characteristics of these spatial data handling business processes. In this research, the 'division of labour' concept is used to describe organisational structures. Given the growing demands for flexibility, caused by the general evolution in the economic and public sector, and more specifically, by the growing importance of information use and exchange, bureaucratic and functionally divided (inter-) organisational forms are expected to have problems handling these demands, while process-oriented, network-based (inter-) organisational forms are supposed to perform better. A case study research design was developed in order to test this hypothesis. The theoretical framework is based on the modern socio-technical systems approach, the social network theory and the transaction cost approach. No previous research has been found that specifically addresses business processes as a major factor influencing SDI performance. For that reason, business processes could be regarded as the proverbial 'missing link' in the SDI network.