Preface

Today, the smart city is a red-hot topic on the urban strategy agendas of governments worldwide. This is especially so in the advanced countries, where fast-paced urban growth has thrown open the door to a mounting number of complex infrastructural and social issues.

Smart cities are being piloted in Europe, the Americas and Asia, from London to Boston to Hong Kong, from Barcelona to Amsterdam to Sau Paulo do Brazil, as citizens across the globe demand their local governments provide urban spaces designed to improve their quality of life. Yet another challenge to the citizens' quality of life is the environmental impact of these ever-larger, more technologically endowed cities, which can only be addressed by reducing pollution levels and through the wise management of natural resources; in other words, by investing in sustainable economic development.

The smart city issue is complex because it straddles several domains, from the city's physical capital to its intellectual and social capital. City planning is not just a question of urban design, but also brings into play social studies, political science, and economics. Further, the concept of smart city is underpinned by its technological core, which in turn is driven by the advances made in the fields of computer science and engineering.

The sharp increase in the number of scientific papers and empirical reports on smart cities forms a loud chorus that underscores the great interest and appeal of this new topic. The book surveys hundreds of scientific contributions on smart cities and affinity concepts, such as digital cities, intelligent cities, and green cities, published since 2010. In addition, the smart city trend has led hundreds of aspiring smart city players to upload their smart city plan to the Internet, making them accessible to all.

The advent of the smart city has sparked great fizz and bang all round, raising public interest to considerable heights, but also sowing confusion. Indeed, an analytical review of the literature reveals several theoretical roadblocks that need to be leaped before we can chart a roadmap that is as smart as the smart city we aspire to live in. Definition, governance, planning, and evaluation are the key steps that need to be addressed on the theoretical and design path that will lead to the best practices, which makes *Smart City—Using High Technology in Urban Spaces to Create Public and Economic Value* edited by Renata Paola Dameri and Camille

Rosenthal-Sabroux a welcome initiative, one that will consolidate our extant knowledge on the complex and multifaceted nature of the smart city.

The book sets out to collate the most important studies written on Europe's smart cities in an attempt to understand whether a smart city truly has the potential to create public value for citizens.

To date, the assumption of all the reviewed smart city studies and implementer reports is that the smart city is a good thing but, strangely, these provide no empirical evidence to support the claims that it helps to improve the quality of life of its citizens. These studies and reports assume that a city is smart exclusively thanks to the technology that is its core component, pointing to it as a winning card, but neglect to study the outcome and impact of the technology on the everyday life of the smart city's people, i.e., the relationship forged by the user with the technology.

As a result, this book dedicates several chapters to the debate on how to measure the impact of smart city initiatives on the creation of public value for the people who live, work, study, and visit a city. To date, studies that explore how to define and measure smart city performance are few and far between, mostly because not only is it difficult to measure a phenomenon that is still embryonic and, hence fuzzy, but also because of the subjective and nuanced view that each citizen has of the quality of life.

Nevertheless, no matter how high the hurdle, it must be leaped if we want solve the crux of how to measure smart city performance and, hence, chart an effective and practical roadmap to achieve the goal of a comprehensive smart city.

The smart cities that exist at present are mainly pilot projects that rely on the use of ICT to transform the traditional city into a better, more liveable place. However, to implement the smart city concept on a global scale takes significant resources, investments, time, and effort, not to mention political commitment. Therefore, if we really want to design and implement projects that create value and generate high returns on investment we need to develop a smart city framework that enables us to gain intelligence and traction on all the gaps in our current knowledge.

We are facing what is called a "grand challenge," meaning that the issue will keep us engrossed for several years to come and, while we are unlikely to arrive at the perfect solution, we still need to explore, investigate, analyze, question, debate, and discuss the smart city to arrive at part-solutions that can put a better and brighter spin on the way we live in our cities.

Rome Marco De Marco

http://www.springer.com/978-3-319-06159-7

Smart City
How to Create Public and Economic Value with High Technology in Urban Space
Dameri, R.P.; Rosenthal-Sabroux, C. (Eds.)
2014, VIII, 238 p. 31 illus., Hardcover
ISBN: 978-3-319-06159-7