

# SAP Research: Collaborative Environment – Featured Partners



## Applies to:

SAP Research

## Summary

Sinan Aral is a Professor at the NYU Stern School of Business and a research affiliate at MIT. His research examines the role of information and information technology in the productivity and performance of firms.

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## Author Bio



**Sinan Aral** is a faculty member in the Information, Operations and Management Sciences Department of the **NYU Stern School of Business**. He received his PhD from the IT Group at **MIT's Sloan School of Management**.

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## Sinan Aral

Sinan Aral is a Professor at the NYU Stern School of Business and a research affiliate at MIT. His research examines the role of information and information technology in the productivity and performance of firms. Specifically, his research follows three streams:

The first stream measures how information flows and IT use impact the productivity of information workers, who now account for over 60 percent of the labor force and nearly 70 percent of the GDP of the United States. This research aims to understand the dynamics of social networks and how they impact the diffusion of information and knowledge; and measures the impact of IT use, IT skills and information flows on multitasking behavior, project duration, and individual and group productivity in information intensive organizations.

The second research stream measures the impact of firm-level IT investments on productivity and business value. This work examines how investments in IT capital, complementary intangible assets, organizational restructuring, and regional economic context impact firms' productivity and performance. The aim of this stream is to understand how firms can achieve greater business value from their IT investments.

The third stream examines the business value of online social networks. This work examines how information and influence diffuse online and how online social networks influence demand patterns, usage behavior, word-of-mouth advertising, and referral marketing.

His work has been published in leading journals such as *Organization Science* and the *Sloan Management Review*, has been mentioned in popular press outlets such as the *Economist*, the *New York Times* and *CIO Magazine*, and has won numerous best paper awards. He currently serves on the advisory board of the Institute for Innovation & Information Productivity (IIIP), a collaboration of industry and academia committed to understanding productivity in the information age.

Sinan has been a Fulbright Scholar, assistant to the director of the Department of Southern Mediterranean Relations at the European Commission, and a technology consultant for several Fortune 1000 firms. He is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Northwestern University and holds masters degrees from the London School of Economics and Harvard University, and a PhD from MIT.

## Collaboration with SAP

Dr. Aral has collaborated extensively with SAP and has written several papers examining the productivity and performance effects of enterprise software. His paper, "**Which Came First, IT or Productivity? The Virtuous Cycle of Investments and Use in Enterprise Systems**" won the **Best Paper Award** in the IT Business Value Track at the International Conference on Information Systems in 2006. This work demonstrates that firms receive productivity and performance gains from enterprise systems such as ERP, SCM and CRM, and that successful firms are motivated to purchase and install additional modules inspiring a virtuous cycle of investment and use.

Current collaborations with SAP include a project that aims to identify the human resource factors, contractual incentives and investments in organizational capital that complement enterprise systems and drive greater value from such implementations. Another project aims to understand how enterprise systems deliver value by combining data on enterprise systems implementations with plant-level Census data to test whether enterprise systems affect competition and whether business process replication across plants helps firms derive value from enterprise systems implementations. Finally, a new project currently under

development tackles frontier problems for the enterprise systems market: the productivity and performance effects of enterprise systems for small and medium sized enterprises, and the market for software as a service (how to predict demand for software as a service and how to devise optimal pricing strategies for utility computing).

## Contact

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