

# Foreword & Acknowledgments

This book is the third in a series of publications that present the latest advancements in research on mass customization and personalization. Starting with Tseng & Piller (2003) and continuing with Piller, Reichwald & Tseng (2006), we again could collect the thinking of some of the leading scholars and practitioners in the field. In comparison to the previous editions, this is the most comprehensive collection of writings on mass customization ever. This inspired our publisher to name it the "Handbook of Research in Mass Customization & Personalization". The contributions in this handbook were inspired by the **4th World Conference on Mass Customization and Personalization (MCPC 2007)**, a biannual academic event that gathers the international research and practice community interested in mass customization, held in October 2007 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), hosted by the MIT Smart Customization Group (Mitchell et al. 2007). The conference also included a business seminar held at HEC Business School in Montreal, Canada. The participant roster of the conference represented the interdisciplinary nature of customization and personalization drawing from a wide range of interest from hard core engineering, fashion design, architecture, retail, business strategy to psychology. The papers in this book reflect this richness and scope. Our authors come from diverse schools in leading research institutions as well as from business practice or consulting firms.

Such a voluminous work is not possible without the help from many individuals. At MIT, we sincerely want to acknowledge the support and help by Prof. **William Mitchell, Ryan Chin** and **Betty Lou McClanahan** from the MIT Design Lab and the MIT Smart Customization Group. As co-chairs and organizers, they were providing leadership for the MCPC 2007 at MIT, hence paving the way that the research presented in this book could be assembled in the first place. From more than 200 conference contributions, an editorial committee selected the papers included in this handbook. All papers were subject of an additional review process. Along with the feedback authors received in the conference, the manuscripts were modified and edited to the collection of papers presented here. There are too many reviewers to name them here individually, but we want to thank them all for their great service to our community.

At RWTH Aachen, **Frank Steiner** coordinated the editorial and publishing process of this large project as the executive editor and provided valuable assistance to us. Dealing with more than 100 authors and coordinating more than 50 papers is a very demanding and time-consuming task. In addition, we thank our

publisher for their patience and continuous support for this project. It was a real pleasure working with **World Scientific Co.** on this book.

Our final thank, however, deserve the authors and contributors to this handbook. Only due to their willingness to contribute their latest research and thinking, this project has been possible. We thank them for their patience and compliance in addressing all the numerous demands and requests that such a book project demands. We believe that the research presented here provides a comprehensive and rich introduction into the various aspects that make mass customization one of the most promising business strategies for this century.

*Frank T Piller*

&

*Mitchell M Tseng*