Economies of scale in ICT: how to balance infrastructure and applications for economies of scale in ICT and business
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The idea to write a thesis was born around the year 2000, in the time that I was manager operations at DIV, an application service provider for 10 hospitals and other healthcare organizations. I noticed there were important economies of scale compared with hospitals that managed their own ICT operations. I talked about this idea with Maarten Looijen, who published at that time an article about the relation between the complexity of the ICT and the therefore required ICT management. His article brought me to the concepts of the first hypothesis in this thesis. As Maarten Looijen was about to leave as emeritus professor, I started my research in 2003 with professor Jan Dietz and Marcel Spruit at Delft University, who helped me with the first steps of my scientific research journey. In 2004 I continued this journey at the University of Amsterdam with professor Rik Maes and professor Guido Dedene. I allowed myself lucky that Guido Dedene was my teacher, as his control of my knowledge creation process was just what I needed: focus on the big picture and adjustment on the important aspects. In 2006 I got the opportunity to obtain empirical data concerning housing corporations, municipalities and hospitals via Patrick van Eekeren, partner of M&I/Partners. These data form the base of the empirical verification of my hypotheses. Besides I met Egon Berghout, professor at Groningen University and associate partner of M&I/Partners, with whom I wrote an article about my research. His ideas have inspired me to extend the scope of the research from ICT productivity to business productivity.

Besides the persons and organizations I already mentioned, I want to thank a number of people that contributed to this research. First of all Cock Schipper and Eric Polman who created the opportunity to combine a job of information manager at the ICT department of the Amphia hospital with my research activities. I want to thank the other colleagues of the Amphia ICT department, especially Anneke van Praet for the tips and tricks in Word. I want to mention my children: Raúl and Leonie for being paranimph and Saskia for the methodological discussions. And above all my wife Emmy, who convinced me to start this research and who shared this scientific journey with me during these inspiring years.

Ulco Woudstra
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