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Editorial Notes

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Editorial Notes

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Two “Issues and Opinions” articles are being published in this issue to stimulate communitywide reflection on enhancing our teaching offerings. Further, the journal also announces a new special issue on digital systems and competition.

Key words: issues and opinions; teaching effectiveness; digital systems; dynamic competitive strategy; information systems society

Occasionally, *Information Systems Research* will publish “Issues and Opinions” articles to promote introspection among the information systems community on issues that confront our teaching, research, and service missions. In an earlier issue (June 2006), the journal had published an article by Joe Valacich, Mark Fuller, Christoph Schneider, and Alan Dennis on the publication opportunities available to information systems scholars (“Publication Opportunities in Premier Business Outlets: How Level Is the Playing Field?”).

This issue contains a second set of “Issues and Opinions” articles that address another important issue confronting us: How do we think about teaching information systems topics to our students in ways that emphasize their relevance to business education? In particular, one of the global challenges facing IS academics in business schools is how we maintain the relevance of, and interest in, our offerings to the business school students. Even as industry and professional associations and firms emphasize the vital importance of information systems savviness among business executives and the growing shortage of IS managers, we continue to observe challenges in designing our courses with the right blend of technical, organizational, and strategic content and experiences.

The situation has been exacerbated by lack of consensus about the design of the core course in undergraduate or graduate business school programs. Unlike other disciplines, opinions about the content of the core course have been varied. Yet, it is clear

that the IS community must converge toward shared frameworks and principles about how we frame our teaching offerings to our students. To stimulate the progress toward a shared understanding, this issue of the journal publishes two articles. First, Vasant Dhar and Arun Sundararajan (both of New York University) have written an opinion piece titled “Information Technologies in Business: A Blueprint for Education and Research.” The authors had conducted interviews with the leadership of 45 business schools to ascertain the deans’ views about how information systems courses could mesh within their schools’ forward-looking programs of education. Although the reports of their interviews have been published elsewhere, in this article the authors reflect on their interviews and present a framework for thinking about framing future education and research initiatives.

Relatedly, the other “Issues and Opinions” article by Andrew McAfee (Harvard Business School) titled “To Those Whom IT Matters Most: Perspectives of IT Faculty on Curricula, Courses, and Course Materials” presents data about how information systems faculty have shaped their teaching of IS courses in business schools. This article reports on the deliberations of a group of information systems faculty who gathered at the Harvard Business School during May 2006 to share their teaching approaches and to discover ways of enhancing the effectiveness of the IS core course in business education.

Taken together, I hope that these articles will stimulate further reflection about how we enhance the effectiveness of IS courses in our respective programs.

Finally, the Information Systems Society has commissioned a site (<http://informs.ismlab.usf.edu/>) to further promote interactions among information systems academics on ideas, initiatives, and questions about the teaching of information systems courses. Chris Dellarocas (University of Maryland) has taken the lead in the design and maintenance of this effort. Clearly, the journal and the society recognize the need for the community to strengthen our teaching effectiveness.

Special Issue on Digital Systems and Competition

Information Systems Research is delighted to announce a new special issue on the topic of digital systems and

competition. The guest editors are Walt Ferrier (University of Kentucky), Clyde Holsapple (University of Kentucky), and Rajiv Sabherwal (University of Missouri, St. Louis). The focus of the special issue is on stimulating research that examines the economic, technical, behavioral, organizational, and strategic issues at the intersection of information systems and competitive strategy. In particular, the special issue seeks novel papers that examine how information systems are playing a role in shaping and enabling dynamic competitive actions. The guest editors and the editorial review board bring a wealth of expertise across the domains of strategy and information systems. A full copy of the call for papers appears at the end of this issue. The deadline for submissions is June 1, 2008.