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Editorial Notes

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Editorial Notes

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In this end of the year editorial commentary *ISR's* accomplishments for 2013 are summarized. I recognize the contribution of members of the editorial board who are retiring and welcome new editorial team members. Winners of the annual *ISR* awards for 2012, including best paper, AE of the year, and reviewer of the year are acknowledged and congratulated. An overview of changes to the journal's mission for 2014 is presented. The commentary closes with a discussion of papers in this issue. The research commentaries, articles, and notes span a broad gamut of research domains and theoretical traditions, ranging from digital networks, to information technology value, to online communities, to the design of software for games. The papers also exhibit considerable methodological diversity, including econometric analyses, qualitative approaches, and analytical modeling.

2013: The Year in Reprise

The end of the year provides an opportunity for reflection on the journal's accomplishments, as well as a time for instituting important changes. In 2013, with this final issue, *ISR* would have published a total of 60 articles, including 2 research commentaries, 49 research papers, and 9 research notes. The first issue of the year was a special issue on "Social Media and Business Transformation," featuring outstanding, state-of-the-art research in a domain that has captured the attention of scholars, practitioners, and policy makers. As was the case in 2012, the number of papers *ISR* is able to accommodate continues to grow, with the support of INFORMS and generous contributions by the Information Systems Society (ISS). Their continued patronage of the journal reflects the quality of work published in *ISR* and its importance for the research community. The steady increase in number of pages has allowed us to reduce the lead time from acceptance to publication substantially so the latest research is available to the community in a timely fashion. Ultimately, the reputation and visibility of the journal is a function of the submissions it receives: I encourage you to submit your best work in information systems to *ISR*!

As has been the practice in past years with *ISR* to develop special issues on topics that are timely, relevant, and of interest to a broad range of stakeholders, I commissioned a special issue on "Information, Technology, and the Changing Nature of Work" with a submission deadline of June 30, 2013. The guest editors for the special issue are Chris Forman, Georgia Institute of Technology, John King, University of Michigan, and Kalle Lyytinen, Case Western Reserve University. The broad objective of the special issue is to stimulate research on the multitude of changes that information technology is wreaking,

broadly, "...the use of information and technology in human enterprise." Papers were solicited across a wide range of topics and research traditions, including "open strategies," new forms of individual and team level work control, and new work regimes, pace, and temporal structuring of work. We received 50 submissions from across the world; at the time of the writing of this editorial, the first round of reviews has been completed and the authors of approximately one quarter of the submissions have been invited to submit a revised version of their papers. Prior to the second round of review, a special issue workshop is slated to help authors develop their papers. We hope to publish the special issue in Volume 25 in 2014.

Editorial Transitions

The end of the year also marks editorial transitions for the journal. The editorial board provides invaluable service to the community in ensuring that the standards of rigor and quality are maintained while continuing to encourage work that is innovative and of high impact. The board is refreshed annually to recognize scholarly contributions made by our colleagues and to introduce new ideas and approaches into the board's skill set. Editorial board appointments reflect the international scope of the journal, its core mission, and the many faces of diversity in our community as indicated in research areas, preferred epistemologies, methodological approaches, and research genres. *ISR* says goodbye and a heartfelt "thank you" to three Senior Editors who are retiring at the end of 2013: Chris Dellarocas (Boston University), Joey George (Iowa State University), and Eric Monteiro (Norwegian University of Science and Technology). I know that many of you join me in expressing gratitude for these editors' commitment

to helping you improve your work, and their investment of substantial effort in facilitating the crafting of a much-improved final product. I would also like to thank the Associate Editors who are completing their term: Jason Thatcher (Clemson University), James Thong (Hong Kong University of Science and Technology), France Belanger (Virginia Polytechnic University), and Andrew Burton-Jones (University of Queensland).

I am pleased to announce the appointment of 7 new Associate Editors: Wolfgang Ketter (Erasmus University), Wonseok Oh (Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology), Nicholas Berente (University of Georgia), Param-Vir Singh (Carnegie-Mellon University), Nilesh Saraf (Simon Fraser University), Jungpil Hahn (National University of Singapore), and Carsten Osterlund (Syracuse University). Collectively, the new AEs possess a wealth of domain and methodological expertise across all the research areas that IS scholars work in. Welcome aboard!

Recognizing Excellence

ISR recognized the exceptional contributions of authors, reviewers and editorial board members through awards presented at the *ISR* reception held at INFORMS each year, in conjunction with the *Conference on Information Systems and Technology (CIST)*. These include the Best Published Paper award, Best Reviewer award, and the Best Associate Editor award. Starting with this year, the ISS has generously agreed to offer \$1,000 in addition to the recognition for the best published paper. I am delighted to announce the winners for outstanding performance in 2012. They are:

2012 AE of the Year Awards

- Kai-Lung Hui, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology;
- Gautam Pant, University of Iowa;
- Sean Xu, Tsinghua University.

2012 Reviewer of the Year Awards

- Xinxin Li, University of Connecticut;
- Ali Tafti, University of Illinois at Chicago.

2012 Best Published Paper Awards

Winner:

Tambe P, Hitt LM (2012) The productivity of information technology investments: New evidence from IT labor data. *Information Systems Research*, 23(3, September) 599–617.

Runner Up:

Susarla A, Oh J-H, Tan Y (2012) Social networks and the diffusion of user generated content: Evidence from YouTube. *Information Systems Research* 23(1, March) 23–41.

Hearty congratulations to the winners!

Editorial Policy Changes for 2014

ISR will be instituting modest changes in the coming year with respect to editorial policies. While the mission of *ISR* remains unchanged, the journal wants to explicitly encourage research that is innovative and has the potential to be high impact. Key changes include a modification in the description of research notes, as well as some requirements for submissions that are focused on methodological contributions. Consistent with the broad movement across multiple disciplines to make scientific work replicable and to construct a cumulative tradition, *ISR* is also instituting a data disclosure policy in 2014 on an initially, volitional opt-in basis. Authors are encouraged to visit the journal's website for additional details.

In This Issue

The papers in the final volume of 2013 are a testament to the quality, relevance, and interestingness of scholarship in the information systems discipline. They are in perfect alignment with *ISR*'s mission of advancing knowledge about the effective and efficient utilization of information technology by individuals, groups, organizations, society, and nations for the improvement of economic and social welfare.

The issue begins with two provocative research commentaries. Today, with unprecedented computing capabilities and the accelerating availability of massive data sets (i.e., "big" data) as scholars we are simultaneously blessed and challenged with the opportunities created. In their research commentary "Too Big to Fail: Large Samples and the p -Value Problem," Lin et al. (2013) caution us from relying solely on statistical significance (that is often easily achieved in large samples) to substantiate the importance of research results, arguing for the need to be concurrently vigilant to substantive and practical significance. The authors offer a number of useful recommendations for researchers working with large data sets on how to tackle the p -value problem. The second research commentary, "Information in Digital, Economic, and Social Networks," (Sundararajan et al. 2013) is motivated by the inconvertible fact that digital technologies have created pervasive networks across a broad swath of personal, social, and economic domains. This commentary not only underscores the importance of networks, it identifies areas in which future research can make valuable contributions in illuminating the causes and consequences of new structures enabled by information technology. Both articles provide useful direction to help shape our collective research endeavors as we increase rigor and relevance in our work, and identify promising new lines of inquiry.

Four papers and one research note in this issue address a persistent and enduring topic of research

for IS scholars: does IT generate value and if so, how? Menon and Kohli (2013) focus on the healthcare sector that is, arguably, not only highly consequential for individuals and societies, but also one that is in the process of fundamental and enduring digital transformation (Lucas et al. 2013). In their study of hospitals the authors investigate the effects of investments in health IT on malpractice insurance premiums and patient care outcomes. Their results provide some surprising and critical insights into the complex effects of IT in healthcare. Continuing the theme of IT value, albeit in a different setting, Chakravarty et al. (2013) conceptualize that IT competencies contribute to organizational agility and organizational performance via two pathways: an enabling role, and a facilitating role. They theorize and find support for the moderating effect of environmental dynamism on the relationship between competencies and outcomes, offering important recommendations for managers on the complex contingencies underlying the extraction of IT value.

A third paper, De et al. (2013) explores a less frequently used outcome in IT value studies: product returns. The core question here is do information technologies render products with enough fidelity that the buyer is satisfied with the purchase? Results from a detailed data set of product purchases and returns in an online retail setting indicate that different technologies such as zoom capabilities and color swatches have distinct effects on product returns. Ghosh and Li (2013) approach the IT value conundrum from a different perspective: how should IT projects be valued, *ex ante*, before a firm decides to make an investment? They present a model grounded in real options theory to aid in the valuation of IT projects that span multiple sequential stages. The application of this model to the case of a firm migrating to a service-oriented architecture compellingly illustrates the application and utility of the proposed approach. Finally, in their research note “Business Value of Information Technology: Testing the Interaction Effect of IT and R&D on Tobin’s Q,” Bardhan et al. (2013) examine how IT in conjunction with R&D collectively influence a market-based and forward looking measure of firm performance. This study nicely complements a robust stream of literature spanning over two decades that has sought to relate investments in IT to firm performance measures.

The Internet has spawned countless virtual communities that create economic and social value in diverse ways, and that raise difficult and interesting research problems ranging from quantifying the benefits, understanding and predicting the nature of interaction and, more broadly, isolating factors that influence participation. Two papers and three research notes address various puzzles in the context of online communities. Park et al. (2013) ask how the infor-

mation on online stock message boards is treated by investors. They find that the consumption and use of this information is vulnerable to a widely documented limitation of human cognitive processes: a confirmation bias. This paper cautions us about the potentially negative consequences of online interaction. In an analytical paper, August et al. (2013) investigate economic incentives in the context of open source software. Their study is distinct from prior work in that it explores the incentives of purely profit motivated firms whose contribution to open-source projects is motivated by the opportunity to generate revenues from the services market. Results shed some surprising and counter-intuitive light on strategic motivations underlying behavior in open source contexts and provide a robust foundation for future work to build on.

Peng and Dey (2013) adopt a network perspective in their research note “A Dynamic View of the Impact of Network Structure on Technology Adoption: The Case of OSS Development.” Distinguishing between current and potential adopters as alters for a focal ego, they investigate how two critical network characteristics, centrality and closure, influence the ego’s technology adoption. Empirical analysis of the adoption of software version control technology in open source projects supports their theorizing. To the extent that the value and benefits of online communities are critically contingent on sustained participation by community members, unraveling the drivers of participation is an important research area. In a research note related again to open-source communities, Zhang et al. (2013) address this in a study of the collective influence of community response and member roles (users and modifiers) on continued participation using a longitudinal data set of activities in over 300 open source projects. Finally Wen et al. (2013) tackle the “openness” challenge of open-source communities: the enforcement of intellectual property rights (IPR). The outcome of interest is again, user interest and developer participation in the community, with IPR enforcement actions as the key independent variable. Using an elegant identification strategy, the authors are able to econometrically isolate and quantify the effects of IPR enforcement on participation across different types of projects.

Technologies that alter and affect online experiences of users have been investigated in a number of prior research studies. One paper and a research note in this issue build upon this literature to offer novel findings into recommender systems and online assurance seals. Adomavicius et al. (2013) ask if recommender systems manipulate consumer preferences. In a set of controlled laboratory experiments, they investigate the malleability of preferences in light of specific recommendations made to users. Among other findings, their results indicate the presence of an anchoring

effect in user preferences, and offer many useful implications for research and practice. Online shopping is inherently fraught with uncertainty and retailers use a variety of signaling mechanisms to communicate their trustworthiness. In their study of the effect of assurance seals on consumer purchasing behavior Özpölat et al. (2013) exploit an extensive data set of shopping sessions at an online retailer to quantify the causal impact of the assurance seal on purchase conversion.

Mani et al. (2013) turn their attention to strategic choices that firms make with respect to their use of IT. They examine how IT outsourcing contracts influence the long-term market performance of the firm. Exploring the differential effects of fixed- versus variable price contracts, they theorize that the former will yield greater market returns for firms that choose them relative to those that do not outsource, while the effects of the latter on market returns are more complex and contingent upon the firm's prior outsourcing experience and relationship with the vendor. Analysis of data on the largest 100 outsourcing initiatives over a 10 year period reveals how firms' choices related to IT outsourcing influence shareholder value. A final paper in this issue, "From Knowing It to "Getting It": Envisioning Practices in Computer Games Development," by Nandhakumar et al. (2013) addresses an emerging research area that will doubtless stimulate significant research in the years to come. The paper discusses the unique challenges in designing artifacts and programs where user experience is central to success, yet, cannot be fully specified *ex ante*. Adopting a lens of "cultural production" the authors suggest that the development of a high-quality user experience requires simultaneous attention to "envisioning" practices and "producing practices."

Taken together, the papers in this issue offer unique, interesting, and surprising insights into both enduring domains of IS research as well as emerging questions and challenges posed by technological developments. I hope you enjoy reading them!

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