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Editorial Notes

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Editorial Notes

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2011–2016: What I Learnt as EIC

It has truly been a privilege and honor to serve as the Editor-in-Chief for *Information Systems Research (ISR)*. I appreciate the confidence and trust the community placed in me both when I was initially appointed and then when I was subsequently renewed for a second term. The role of EIC during the past six years has been incredibly informative and educational for me personally. It has also been challenging, gratifying, inspirational, difficult, and enjoyable. And of course it involved substantial effort! In this final editorial I want to take the opportunity to reflect on what I have observed and learnt “on the job.”

First, I have a new appreciation for the varieties of scholarship that collectively contribute to the intellectual foundations of our discipline. As a result, I have expanded my own knowledge and understanding. Each editor comes into the job with their own research agenda and preferred methodologies that define them as a scholar. As editor, you have the unique opportunity to read widely and deeply and extend your own thinking beyond your specific research program. As I read, managed, and shepherded over 2,000 papers across diverse areas of research through the peer review process, I learned about phenomena and methodologies that I may never have encountered if I had continued simply working on my own research. This has been tremendously eye-opening and has enriched my own scholarly pursuits.

Second, the time-span of six years has very vividly illustrated the striking improvements in methodological sophistication that are starting to characterize the best research in information systems (IS). The papers submitted to *ISR* today are carefully and rigorously crafted, paying closer attention to issues of causality and identification that were not so frequently addressed in the past, and subjecting the data to an extensive battery of robustness tests. I have also observed the increasing use of randomized, controlled experiments as a preferred research design, further

enhancing the rigor of the studies. These are all developments that reinforce the growing maturity of IS as a discipline.

A third encouraging trend that I have observed over my tenure as EIC is the responsiveness of IS scholars to shifts in the environment. Very few disciplines experience the volatility that we as IS scholars contend with on an ongoing basis: developments and innovations in technology, emergence of new business and delivery models constructed around information technology (IT), shifts in consumer preferences, and the growing ubiquity of and mediation by technology in all aspects of societal, organizational, and personal transactions. IS scholars have been swift to pick up new research questions and revisit old ones as we confront the changes in the environment, be they questions related to the use of social media, the creative use of big data, the application of IT in healthcare, or the growing concerns about cybersecurity. The need to refresh research portfolios is critical in any fast moving field and arguably even more so in IS. It has been heartwarming to see the robust response from our community.

Fourth, I am struck by the creativity of IS scholars in looking beyond disciplinary boundaries to seize and appropriate theories that may be valuable in enriching our understanding of IT-related phenomena. The debate about the desirability of “borrowing theories” notwithstanding, I continue to believe that the essence of many questions that IS researchers study share elements in common with “sister” disciplines: economics, psychology, computer science, to name a few. There is little to be lost and much to be gained by adopting a wider, more inclusive perspective that embraces concepts from other fields and contextualizes them with the unique nuances that we bring to the table by virtue of our deep understanding of information systems and technology.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not point out one key learning for me that was somewhat unexpected and surprising. In the process of leading and managing a major journal, I learnt it is not only intellect

that matters for the success of the academic enterprise but equally, if not more so, character. Character that defines basic values of fairness and integrity in processes of peer review and of professionalism, where the only consideration is the content and substance of the research that is being evaluated and everything else is irrelevant. Character that ensures that appropriate attributions and acknowledgments are made in one's own research. The importance of character is relevant for all participants in the knowledge generation process: authors, reviewers, and editorial board members, alike. As EIC I had many occasions to come to appreciate how central character is to the process of academic publishing, and I am thankful for this insight.

2016: A Retrospective

As *ISR* looks forward to 2017 and a new Editor-in-Chief, it is useful to reflect on the accomplishments of the journal during this past year. In 2016 as in the past, *ISR* continued and reinforced its mission to publish the “best” research in the IS discipline that addresses topics of relevance for academic, practice, and policy audiences, and does so with rigor.

The journal published a total of 51 papers in Volume 27, including research commentaries, regular articles, and research notes. The number of papers *ISR* is able to accommodate continues to grow, with the support of INFORMS and contributions by the Information Systems Society (ISS). In 2016, the journal published 991 pages, representing a substantial increase over the 609 pages from just 7 years ago in 2009. *ISR* now has a lead time from acceptance to publication of less than 9 months! After an article is accepted, the typeset “Article in Advance” is guaranteed within 90 days of the final submission of all documents. This is important for the timely dissemination of new knowledge and especially critical for junior colleagues in the academy.

2016 was a banner year for *ISR* in regard to remaining at the vanguard in publishing research that addresses various aspects of the changes wrought by IT that are timely and policy relevant. In addition to the regular submissions, two special issues focused on different aspects of IT-enabled change appear in this issue: one on “Collaboration and Value Creation in Online Communities,” and a second on “Ubiquitous IT and Digital Vulnerabilities.” A new special issue call on “Digital Infrastructures and Platforms” announced earlier this year attracted a large volume of submissions, reflecting the widespread interest in the community in understanding how IT is becoming the backbone for the conduct of economic and social transactions, and the associated challenges and opportunities. Be sure to read the papers in this special issue when it is published in 2017.

You might recall that in 2015 *ISR* pioneered the addition of a new section “Research Spotlights.” This section presents non-technical briefs of the papers published in the issue and is intended for broader dissemination to audiences who may not be experts in the field. The spotlights specifically cull out managerial implications of the research. Please use these spotlights to showcase and promote the research of our discipline to others in your professional networks, including colleagues in other departments, practicing executives, and policy makers.

Editorial Transitions

The editorial board is the cornerstone of a journal. It is responsible for upholding the standards of excellence and ensuring that the journal's mission of knowledge creation and impact is fulfilled. Appointment as an editor signifies not only acknowledgement of scholarly accomplishments but equally, a willingness to contribute time and effort in mentoring and helping others improve their research. Each year *ISR* recognizes the contribution of its editors who have completed their terms and welcomes aboard new members. As always, editorial appointments are made to reflect the international scope of the journal as well as the diversity of the IS discipline.

Five Senior Editors are rotating off the board after completing their terms: Sanjeev Dewan (University of California–Irvine), Robert Fichman (Boston College), Vijay Mookerjee (University of Texas at Dallas), Radhika Santhanam (University of Oklahoma), and Hock-Hai Teo (National University of Singapore). A big thank you to them for valuable service and contributions to *ISR*!

Associate Editors are responsible for managing reviewers and providing Senior Editors with an independent, value-adding judgement on the merits of a paper. In 2016, *ISR* would like to recognize the service contributions of 12 AEs who are completing their terms, some of whom have served more than one term! Kudos to Nicholas Berente (University of Georgia), Yulin Fang (City University of Hong Kong), Jeffrey Hu (Georgia Institute of Technology), Atreyi Kankanhalli (National University of Singapore), Subodha Kumar (Texas A&M University), Amit Mehra (Indian School of Business), Carsten Oesterlund (Syracuse University), Gautam Pant (University of Iowa), Nilesh Saraf (Simon Fraser University), Anjana Susarla (Michigan State University), Paul Tallon (Loyola University), and Michael Zhang (Hong Kong University of Science and Technology).

I am delighted to announce the appointment of eight new Senior Editors, Yulin Fang (City University of Hong Kong), Rajiv Kohli (William and Mary), Anand Gopal (University of Maryland), Ram

Gopal (University of Connecticut), Raghu Santanam (Arizona State University), Olivia Sheng (University of Utah), Michael Zhang (Hong Kong University of Science and Technology), and Eric Zheng (University of Texas at Dallas). Nine new AEs join the *ISR* team: Martin Bichler (Technical University of Munich), Pei-Yu Chen (Arizona State University), Ming-Feng Lin (University of Arizona), Likoebe Maruping (Georgia State University), Joe Nandhakumar (University of Warwick), Choon Ling Sia (City University of Hong Kong), Ning Su (University of Western Ontario), Maytal Saar-Tsechansky (University of Texas at Austin), and Oliver Yao (Lehigh University). Collectively, the new SEs and AEs possess a wealth of domain and methodological expertise across all the research areas that IS scholars work in. Welcome aboard!

Recognizing Distinguished Performance

Each year *ISR* acknowledges the exceptional performance and contributions of authors, reviewers, and editorial board members through awards presented at the *ISR* reception held at INFORMS Annual Meeting. These include the Best Published Paper award, Best Reviewer award, and the Best Associate Editor awards for accomplishments in the prior year. Congratulations to all the winners for 2015!

Reviewers of the Year 2015

- Gordon Burtch, University of Minnesota
- Steven Johnson, University of Virginia

AEs of the Year 2015

- Nicholas Berente, University of Georgia
- Paul Tallon, Loyola University

Best Paper Awards for 2015

Winner

- Foster Provost, David Martens, Alan Murray. Finding Similar Mobile Consumers with a Privacy-Friendly Geosocial Design. *Information Systems Research* 26(2):243–265.

Runner-up

- Indranil Bardhan, Jeong-ha (Cath) Oh, Zhiqiang (Eric) Zheng, Kirk Kirksey. Predictive Analytics for Readmission of Patients with Congestive Heart Failure. *Information Systems Research* 26(1):19–39.

Thank You

When I started as EIC of *ISR* in January 2011, I had articulated a vision for my tenure. I viewed my role

as a passionate advocate for the journal across the global IS community. I sought breadth of perspective and inclusivity in the journal's epistemological stance, I aimed to publish research on issues that were intellectually stimulating, topical, and reflected the changes occurring in the broader world in which we live. I wanted *ISR* to be at the vanguard of publishing research on cutting-edge phenomena, with a special emphasis on novel, emergent, and interdisciplinary problems. And I urged the editorial board to keep a couple of meta-considerations in mind as they evaluated research: the dual criteria of "innovation" and "impact." For the former, I asked if we were pushing the boundaries of the discipline, if there was innovation in the choice of research topics, phenomena, methodologies, and research contexts. For the latter, the relevant questions included asking if the research was policy relevant, if it resonated with executives and practitioners, and if it captured the imagination of scholars beyond our discipline.

As I look back over my tenure, I am encouraged over the considerable progress the journal has made. *ISR* has commissioned five special issues on state-of-the-art topics: social media and business transformation, IT and the changing nature of work, ubiquitous IT and digital vulnerabilities, collaboration and value creation in online communities, and digital infrastructure and platforms. It has published an editorial on big data and analytics in IS research, and a growing number of submissions are addressing timely topics related to IT and healthcare transformation, crowd-funding, the sharing economy, and digital security. *ISR* continues to be regarded as an elite journal in the discipline and a highly desirable outlet for scholars as they build their research portfolios and seek advancement in their careers.

I close this editorial and my term with a heartfelt "thank you" to all the members of the editorial board and countless reviewers whose insights, effort, and commitment have allowed the journal to remain a leading outlet for research in IS. They have been pivotal in maintaining the standards and quality that the discipline values and wants to promote. I also want to acknowledge the outstanding support of the editorial team at INFORMS—the managing editors I have worked with (Kathleen Luckey and Frances Moskwa), the Publications Directors (Miranda Walker and Matthew Walls), and the production editor, Sandor Roberts. Without their timely and responsive assistance, the task of publishing approximately 1000 peer reviewed pages each year would have been even more daunting. I acknowledge the contributions of all the team members I have worked with over these six years with much appreciativeness.