This issue explores key issues instrumental to the successful use of technologies by organizations. The articles explore the issues from a variety of different perspectives from organization-wide Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems to global, inter-organizational systems. Each article presents a unique perspective for examining the many facets and factors that are likely to be critical to success and then, recommends approaches for better understanding of the implementation of information technology in organizations.

The issue begins with the description of an academic ERP by Martz, Raghavan, and Zhang. The authors show how systems in the “real world” have been studied and reported in the information system literature. The authors described how critical success factors such as process reengineering and management commitment have been shown to be related to successful ERP implementation. Due to the rapid growth of ERPs in the business world, they describe the increasing desire to bring ERP related concepts into business curricula. Their article takes one key critical success factor and decomposes it into a set of underlying concepts necessary to help create a workable ERP curriculum. They describe ideas for introducing key concepts in courses and show how their recommendations can operate as a start for developing an ERP program.

Similarly, Peszynski uses a case study of the implementation of an enterprise-wide learning management system at Newlands University to explore human factors issues, specifically the role of power and politics in systems implementation. Pesynski describes and demonstrates how current literature is simplistic and misses the complexities involved in systems implementation. Hawking article discusses the complexities when ERP systems are implemented globally. He demonstrates the complexities faced by companies which are implementing these systems in a single country and around the world. The article describes the considerable research that has been conducted on the critical success factors associated with ERP implementations and makes recommendations for further exploration.

Reimers, Johnston, and Klein observe how existing models of inter-organisational information systems (IOIS) do not explain IOIS variance and propose that a new theoretical framework should meet three criteria. Specifically, they state that it should: (1) support identification of and distinction between essential properties of IOIS; (2) explain the resilience of IOIS, i.e., why (properties of) IOIS persist in the face of envi-
environamental change; (3) offer a way of describing IOIS on the organisational as well as on the collective level, i.e. the level of various types of collectives of organisations such as networks, associations or industries. Their article then uses these three criteria to assess four theories commonly used in IOIS studies (Transaction Cost Theory, Resource Dependence Theory, Neo-Institutionalism, Structuration Theory) and presents a new framework for studying IOIS variance which views IOIS as constellations of aligned practices.

Finally, Van Over provides a framework for linking the ever expanding expenditures for information technologies to business requirements. While information technology expenditures are a large portion of organizational expenses, Van Over describes how many of the related costs are not linked to the business value derived from them and how significant portions of IT expenditures are hidden. His article presents a framework that focuses on the methods and means of creating a linkage between business requirements and how IT investments can address these requirements. The proposed ITIM framework addresses three key elements of ITIM: what decisions are to be made, who should make the decisions, and how decisions are to be made and monitored. The article describes ITIM as a management that provides for the identification (pre-selection), selection, control, and evaluation of business driven IT investments across the investment lifecycle. Also described is how ITIM uses structured processes to minimize risks and maximize return on investments along with a high-level ITIM implementation plan.

Caroline Howard
Editor-in-Chief
IJSITA

Caroline Howard (PhD) is an author, editor, consultant, and educator. She is an independent academic. Prior to becoming online faculty, she was on the faculty of Emory University’s Goizueta Business School and the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. Caroline holds an MBA from The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania and a PhD in management information systems from the University of California - Irvine where she received honors for her teaching and research. She has published a number of articles on technology and learning. Her books include the first and 2nd editions of the Encyclopedia of Distance Learning (2005 and 2009), Winning the Net Game: Becoming Profitable Now that the Web Rules have Changed (Entrepreneur Press, 2002), The Design and Management of Effective Distance Learning Programs (2002), and Distance Learning and University Effectiveness: Changing Educational Paradigms for Online Learning (2005).