Reflecting the diversity of information technologies and related issues that are fundamental to strategic application of information systems, Volume 2 begins by covering a variety of technologies and perspectives. The discussion focuses on very different but important information technology issues from alignment of technology and business strategy to organizational transformation by information technology. Information Systems roles, social media development, and development of Open Source Software (OSS) are also covered.

Xing, Peterson, and Wang set the stage for the issue with a description of how Information Technology is changing business infrastructures and the way people work. They describe trends and impacts related to five facets of transformation through Information Technology: Internet and Telecommunications, New Features, Security and Disaster Recovery, Power of Computing, and Green IT. Their coverage includes both the trends and impacts of each of these areas.

Shawyun’s article builds on transformation with a fresh approach to strategic business and Information Technology alignment to achieve organization performance. They contend that the internal IS/IT approach may not address the needs of both an organization’s internal and external customers. The article describes a market based push-pull framework that includes the push strategy of the organization in what it wants to offer for what price matched with the pull strategy of the market which is what it wants to buy for the prices it is willingly to pay. The article describes how once the market pull and firm push strategy is determined, the alignment of the IT is based on the push-pull effect of the business requirement to serve and satisfy both internal and external customers’ needs and requirements through the organization’s value proposition. IT is presented as the main enabling mechanism to create and deliver on the value as proposed to the organizations customers.

The issue continues with Hunter’s examination of two roles fundamental to Information Technology management. Hunter conducted interviews and then used the qualitative approach, Narrative Inquiry to document the interpretations of the roles of Chief Information Officer (CIO) and Chief Technology Officer (CTO) in the senior management team of a financial organization. His results suggest that the organization benefits in many ways when these roles are included on the top management team. With these roles included in the senior management, Hunter found teams are more collaborative and more proactive in planning.
Both the effectiveness and efficiency of decision making result from the immediate consideration of the availability of technical resources and affect on business processes. Decision making is both efficient and effective because of the immediate consideration for both the affect on business processes and the availability of technological support.

The next article discusses the important topic of selecting Open Source Software (OSS). While OSS can be a viable alternative for organizations, as described by Ahmad and LaPlante, it can be very challenging to select the appropriate Open Source Software (OSS) for a given problem or a set of requirements. Problems include many choices of OSS without generally accepted evaluation criteria. To solve this, Ahmad and Laplante propose a set of criteria and a methodology for assessing candidate OSS for fitness of purpose using both functional and non-functional factors. Their article describes how they used the criteria in an improved solution to the decision problem using the well-developed Analytical Hierarchy Process and validated the proposed model by applying it at a technology management company in the United Arab Emirates.

Finally, with organizations increasingly using social media as part of their strategy to connect with customers, global online communities offer opportunities for socialization, entertainment, access to company content and support. To support the development of successful social media in global organizations, Dill et al. present results of a survey examining national culture for an international scuba diving organization. Their article uses Geert Hofstede’s research to examine Hofstede’s dimension on individualism and collectivism dimension and its impact on user preferences, habits and behavior in an online social community. The results noted that there are significant differences between countries and age groups, and the paper includes an analysis of the collected data and recommendations for further research.

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).