EDITORIAL PREFACE

Global Impacts and Implications of ICT Applications and Capabilities

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The global nature and impacts of information technology and strategy are particularly evident in the issue. Application of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and resulting capabilities, strongly influence organizations, economies, and societies. This issue explores aspects of these influences and the implications for processes and planning of effective ICT use. The first three articles discuss the issues at the organizational level while the remaining articles discuss national and international issues.

To enable better understanding of the global marketplace where change and uncertainty makes strategic information systems planning (SISP) difficult, Naser Khani et al. investigate the capability factors affecting strategic information systems planning success at the organizational level. Reviewing SISP literature reveals some essential IS capabilities for SISP and how they affect SISP success. Khani et al. describe how the dynamic changes in the environment necessitate these capabilities as it becomes essential to achieve a fit between SISP and internal resources of the firm, which require information on a broad set of organizational attributes of firm and the effects on SISP success. In this study, the relationship between capability factors and SISP success were investigated through an extensive literature review on capability factors with interviews to validate the linkages. Hypotheses were developed and tested utilizing responses collected from 167 medium to large Iranian organizations. Using PLS for data analysis, the results showed the important role of capability factors in SISP success that could be beneficial for both practice and research.

To ensure SISP success requires having effective organizational processes. However, while information technology (IT) governance and investment decision making from an executive-level perspective are explored in IS literature, there is little discussion from the perspective of process owners and process managers focusing on their role in IT process improvement and investment decision-making. To fill this gap, Lamp, Hargiss, and Howard describe the results of a qualitative multiple case study that explores the way decisions are made in two IT organizations regarding process improvement initiatives by using face-to-face semi-structured interviews with 20 IT process owners and process managers in healthcare insurance company and a manufacturer of electronic interconnects. The study focused on uncovering (a) how IT process improvements are prioritized and how approvals are
attained, (b) how senior leadership is involved in decision making, (c) how security and risk are considered, (d) if and how formal process improvement methodologies are used, (e) if and how estimated and actual cost benefit analysis are conducted associated with decisions, and (f) how alignment with organizational goals is attained. The study results revealed that pre-decision stages take place in IT investment decision making, and that process owners and process managers, participants other than senior leadership and executive level decision makers, are involved in these pre-decision stages, and may be involved in the final decision stages.

Also, at the organizational level, Samanta explores the factors related to customer retention in the mobile sector. Since effective relationships are recognized as important to customer retention, Samanta study focuses on probably determinants of relationship satisfaction including trust, service quality, price perception, inertia, indifference and switching barriers. A questionnaire study of 804 participants found significant relationships between independent variables price perception, inertia, price perception, and customer satisfaction and the dependent variable, customer retention.

The last two articles demonstrate the importance of information and communication technology (ICT) as enabling platform for business and socioeconomic development in the 21st century and how ICT can set the pace for a competitive, dynamic, rapidly changing global marketplace. During and after the uprising, ICT’s impact went well being a state-of-the-art infrastructure to demonstrate the newly emerging role ICT can play in the 21st century that goes beyond socioeconomic development and growth. ICT strategy development and implementation is best designed to cater to the societal, economic, and political needs of the community. Thus, to maximize benefits ICT must be coupled with concrete projects and initiatives which involve multiple stakeholders from public, private, government and civil society organizations plus engage the society at large. Rizk and Kamel describe ICT in Egypt emphasizing the national ICT strategy development and deployment within the context of an emerging economy as an integral element of Egypt’s overall development process and the various growing potentials ICT offers for socioeconomic development.

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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).