Editorial Preface

Cases on Information Technology

Mehdi Khosrow-Pour, Editor-in-Chief
Journal of Cases on Information Technology

INTRODUCTION

Insight into successful IT implementation and also impending failure can be extremely instrumental in learning about success factors, as well as causes in failure, in information technology applications and projects. Traditionally, case studies have proven to be excellent sources of lessons learned for information technology researchers and professionals.

During the past six years, the Journal of Cases on Information Technology (formally known as the Annals of Cases on Information Technology) has published real-life IT-related cases to provide valuable insights into IT success and failure factors on an annual basis (one issue a year). Starting with this volume, the journal will be published on a quarterly basis (four issues per volume/year). The mission and focus of the journal will be the same.

In this issue of JCIT, many IT researchers and professionals from around the world have written valuable real-life IT case studies covering a variety of topics and issues related to IT utilizations and management in modern organizations. Each case includes integral information regarding organizations working with IT, including key individuals involved, intelligent steps taken (or perhaps overlooked), and the final project outcomes. These cases cover a variety of IT initiatives, including software development projects, ERP adoption, learning management systems, enterprise system implementation within a health board, a community-based knowledge management system, knowledge-based policing system implementation, information technology change intervention, and IT adoption in developing nations. IT managers and researchers will find this issue useful as it suggests ways to successfully implement IT within various scenarios and also manage unfortunate downfalls. Using the real-life situations as facilitators for classroom discussion, professors and students will benefit as well from this collection of cases. Following are summaries of the cases contained in this issue.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

An Experiential Case Study in IT Project Management Planning: The Petroleum Engineering Economics Evaluation Software Imperative, by Charles K. Davis, University of St. Thomas (USA), describes an organization’s need for a complex software package internal development. This operational and functional situation provides a framework for
developing a set of project plans for a software development project to address these needs. The goal of this case is to develop a detailed project plan, including schedules, staffing, and deliverables by task, and cost estimates.

The Selection of the IT Platform: Enterprise System Implementation in the NZ Health Board is by Maha Shakir and Dennis Viehland, Massey University (New Zealand). Discussing the challenges facing the Health Board enterprise system implementation team in dealing with a necessary IT platform change before the system goes live, this case presents issues pertaining to the initial choice of IT platform, the failure of the platform to meet contractual specifications, and the challenges the project team faced in resolving this problem.

A Case of an IT-Enabled Organizational Change Intervention: The Missing Pieces, by Bing Wang and David Paper, Utah State University (USA), documents an organizational change intervention concerning the implementation of a novel information technology (IT) at a university-owned research institute. It describes disparate experiences by key actors toward the intervention, marking a mismatch between a new paradigm and the existing IT culture. In particular, resistance from in-house IT specialists was observed as the strongest force obstructing the novel IT implementation.

Beyond Knowledge Management: Introducing Learning Management Systems is authored by Audrey Grace and Tom Butler, University College Cork (Ireland). Many world-class organizations are now employing a new breed of systems known as Learning Management Systems (LMS) to foster and manage learning within their organizations. This case study reports on the deployment of an LMS by a major U.S. multinational and proposes a framework for understanding learning in organizations, which highlights the roles that LMS can play in today’s knowledge-intensive organizations.

Information Technology in the Practice of Law Enforcement, by Susan Rebstock Williams and Cheryl Aasheim, Georgia Southern University (USA), describes the development and implementation of a knowledge-based policing system; this case discusses how the system enables information regarding incident reports, arrests, and investigations to be collected, distributed, and managed in a paperless, wireless environment. The challenges faced in merging wireless, wired, database, and application technologies while satisfying the user requirements of the police department are detailed in this report.

Siemens: Expanding the Knowledge Management System ShareNet to Research & Development is by Hauke Heier, European Business School (Germany), Hans P. Borgman, Universiteit Leiden (The Netherlands), and Andreas Manuth, Siemens Informations & Communication Networks (Germany). The issues surrounding the pending expansion of Siemens’ community-based knowledge management system ShareNet to the research and development function are described in this case. Information systems implementation issues, as well as change management interventions, are discussed. Particular emphasis is placed on motivation factors for end users, user champions, and top management.

Adoption & Implementation of IT in Developing Nations: Experiences from Two Public Sector Enterprises in India is authored by Monideepa Tarafdar, University of Toledo (USA), and Sanjiv D. Vaidya, Indian Institute of Management Calcutta (India). This case describes IT adoption issues at two large public sector organizations in India. In addition to illustrating the significance of top management drive and end-user buy in, it particularly highlights the role of middle management in managing the IT adoption process at different levels in these large organizations.
Development of KABISA: A Computer-Based Training Program for Clinical Diagnosis in Developing Countries is authored by Louis Vermeulen, Institute of Tropical Medicine (Belgium), Stefano Laganà, Ospedale Sacro Cuore at Negrar (Italy), Koenraad Blot, Pfizer Canada Inc. (Canada), Zeno Bisoffì, Sacros Cuore Hospital at Negrar (Italy), Erwin Van de Enden, Institute of Tropical Medicine (Belgium), Luc Kestens, University of Antwerp (Belgium), and Jef Van den Ende, Institute of Tropical Medicine (Belgium). The built-in tutor follows the student’s input with complex logical algorithms and mathematical computations, gives comments and support, and accepts the final diagnosis if sufficient evidence has been built up. Several problems arose with the development. In the first place, the evolution in the teaching of clinical logic is always ahead of the program, so regular updating of the computer logic is necessary. Secondly, the choice of MS Access as computer language has provoked problems of stability, especially the installation of an MS Access runtime. Thirdly, and most importantly, scholars want proof of the added value of computer programs over classical teaching. Moreover, the concept of a pedagogical “game” is often regarded as childish. Finally, the planning and financing of an “open-ended” pedagogical project is questioned by deciders, as is the case with all operational research.

CONCLUSION

Although every situation involving IT differs dramatically from the next, IT managers and students alike can glean useful bits of knowledge from those who have experienced either the triumph of successful IT implementation or the disappointment of IT catastrophe. We hope that the cases included in this issue of the Journal of Cases on Information Technology will be instrumental to IT researchers, professionals, policy makers, teachers, and students, in learning from the success and failure of other professionals and organizations around the world. As always, your feedback and comments will be greatly appreciated.

Mehdi Khosrow-Pour, DBA
Editor-in-Chief
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