Over time, real-life case studies have grown in importance in the classroom, as we gain an understanding of the value of shared insights of successful information technology (IT) development and implementation. These real-life applications of IT provide students, professors, and the practitioners with invaluable understanding, which in turn, teaches the next generation of IT practitioners to avoid pitfalls of this technology.

In this issue of the Journal of Cases on Information Technology (JCIT), professionals and researchers from all over the globe illustrate their IT development and implementation experiences through case studies describing modern organizations and their IT applications. The people involved, the steps that were taken, and the utilization results highlight the various problems and solutions that might arise during IT implementation. The cases presented here span a variety of IT scenarios, including electronic education of a computer graphics class, a hardware retailer’s IT implementation, insider IT cyber attacks, enterprise resource planning upgrading, IT implementation in a startup organization, and small company IT security. These real-life cases were designed to facilitate discussion and debate in the classroom for both educators and students alike, as well as to show IT managers and researchers alike the many useful examples explained here and to instruct them on what to do and what not to do when utilizing IT in their own organization and companies. The following is a summary of the cases included in this issue.

**Inside This Issue**

*The Snakes and Ladders Game in E-Business: Digital Transformation at American Hardware Depot* by C. Ranganathan and Dong Back Seo, University of Illinois (USA), describes the experiences of a co-operative hardware retailer in implementing a series of technology and e-business initiatives aimed at strengthening customer, supplier, and dealer relationships. The case explains the initiatives in detail including failed attempts, challenges faced, and steps taken to tackle these challenges as well as issues that need to be addressed.

While abundant research deals with risks of ERP implementation, only a handful deal with ERP upgrades. *The First ERP Upgrade Project at DSW: Lessons Learned From Disillusion With Simplicity Expectations* by Marta Zarotsky, Dead Sea Works (Israel), Nava Pliskin, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (Israel), and Tsipi Heart, University College Cork (Ireland), is a case study that describes the first ERP upgrade project at the Dead Sea Works (DSW) chemical company. Whereas DSW succeeded in completing the initial ERP implementation project within budget and six months ahead of schedule, the first ERP upgrade project was fraught with difficulties in project planning, schedule control, cost containment, risk assessment, and employee...
involvement. Based on this case analysis, it is possible to conclude that the first ERP upgrade project at DSW was much more complicated than originally expected.

**Securing E-Learning Systems: A Case of Insider Cyber Attacks and Novice IT Management in a Small University** by Michelle Ramim and Yair Levy, Nova Southeastern University (USA), addresses issues related to insider cyber attacks combined with novice IT management knowledge in a small university. It describes a devastating event that halted all e-learning activities in that university. The case reveals that internal cyber attack as well as lack of proper IT policies and procedures all resulted in multiple instances of damage to the e-learning system.

**Developing a Telecommunication Operation Support Systems (OSS): The Impact of a Change in Network Technology** by James G. Williams, University of Pittsburgh (USA) and Kai A. Olsen, Molde College and University of Bergen, Norway, focuses on the practical problems and potential solutions facing an IT department in a startup, Competitive Local Exchange Carrier (CLEC) organization with regard to designing and implementing an Operation Support System (OSS), when a change in a telecommunications network component, the central office switch, is made after 75% of the system development and implementation had been completed.

**Cyber-Learning in Cyberworlds** by Alexei Sourin and Olga Sourina, Nanyang Technological University (Singapore) and Ekaterina Prasolova-Førland, Norwegian University of Science and Technology (Norway), discusses the problems of teaching computer graphics and shape modeling in large and distributed classes using visual cyberworlds—shared media-rich information worlds built on the Web. Augmenting the existing ways of electronic education with cyberworlds appears to be useful which was proved by the final exam results and overall attitude of the students.

**Better Securing an Infrastructure for Telework** by Loreen Marie Butcher-Powell, Bloomsburg University (USA), describes a small company’s security breaches as a result of enhancing their existing network infrastructure to include telework. In an effort to better safeguard their network, the Chief Information Officer (CIO) invested over $100,000 U.S. dollars in research in order to modify their existing protection strategy in an effort to create more concentrated and specialized training at the root of the problem. The existing and modified risk assessment protection strategy is explained in detail within the context of the needs of the telework infrastructure. The modifications to the OCTAVE Model are still being conducted; however, preliminary results are presented.

With each case involving a different kind of information technology application and its successes and failures, IT managers and students alike are provided with a variety of examples to draw from. It is our hope that the cases included in this issue of the Journal of Cases on Information Technology will enlighten IT researchers, professionals, policy makers, teachers, and students in their own IT implementation situations and studies. As always, your feedback and comments are greatly appreciated.

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*Journal of Cases on Information Technology*