Preface

Perhaps the only thing developing at a comparable pace to Information Science and Technology is the language used to describe these developments. Only a few years ago words that are now in common usage were nonsensical. Tweeting only meant to imitate a bird, the way to visit a cloud was through flight, and the idea that the same technology used to share cat photos could influence geopolitical realities was absurd. The impact of these technologies on both the individual and society as a whole is indescribable, but that does not mean that people do not try. Each new advancement, each new relationship, each new theory or discovery requires a corresponding word, phrase, or usage. Therefore, language has adapted just as rapidly and is growing alongside new ideas. This is the force that necessitates a clear, succinct, quality dictionary such as this.

Those readers familiar with IGI Global publications will know that many of our chapters authored by experts throughout the world include key terms and definitions with the aim of providing the reader with a clear understanding of the usage of that term within the context of the chapter. The first edition of this dictionary collected these terms with the editorial goal of providing an expansive, comprehensive inclusion of the definitions, allowing the reader to note the subtle differences between authorial definitions according to the context of the chapter. This had many benefits at the time, providing a mini library of usages through which the reader could see the blossoming of a multi-faceted term. Since then, however, IGI Global has accrued well over 45,000 individual definitions (at the time of this printing), which would quite simply overwhelm any reader and be prohibitive to print. Furthermore, technical advances have made it much more productive include such a list in an interactive database. Therefore, the exhaustive list is available through the InfoSci Dictionary database, which allows the reader to indulge in an exploration of the many shades of meaning created by various usages and contexts.

However, this does not mean that a carefully vetted, quality print publication does not have its place. As such, all definitions have been carefully read, selected, and edited to ensure that the reader is finding the fullest definition of the term that is available. The first edition of this dictionary utilized a significant 2,500 contributors. For this edition, we have increased that number tenfold, compiling the work of an astounding 25,000 individual authors. To provide the most comprehensive coverage of IST language, the idea of a new Dictionary of Information Science and Technology was formed to provide the most in-depth and complete introduction to all terms, acronyms, and definitions related to some of most commonly studied areas of IST, such as accounting information systems; database management and technologies; data warehousing and mining; decision support systems technologies; distance education technologies; e-collaboration; electronic commerce technologies management; end user computing; enterprise resource planning, expert systems; geographical information systems; global IT management; human computer interaction; human side of IT; information resources management; information security management;
information systems research; information technology education; IT evaluation methods and management; IT management in libraries; IT management in health care; IT in small business; IT personnel; professional IT association; intelligent information systems; knowledge management; minorities in information technology; mobile computing and commerce; multimedia information management; object oriented technologies; open source technologies and systems; social responsibility in the information age; software engineering; strategic IT management; telecommunications and networking technologies; unified modeling languages and unified process; and virtual communities and IT.

The two-volume Dictionary of Information Science and Technology is the premier comprehensive resource composed of the latest terms and definitions related to all aspects of the information science and technology field. This complete and timely reference collection defining more than 12,000 terms and acronyms will provide researchers, practitioners, educators and students with the most accurate and current knowledge available of prevalent key words in the ever-expanding world of IST. Terms and definitions included in this important reference publication were contributed by over 25,000 noted researchers from all inhabited continents. The Dictionary of Information Science and Technology will prove to be a valuable and essential reference publication for libraries and individuals worldwide.

When one distills what is accomplished by this volume, it is a catalogue of innovation, change, and growth in what is rapidly becoming one of the most important facets of life: information science and technology. The living knowledge contained in this compendium, and in the InfoSci Dictionary, will only grow in importance and applicability as each discipline within information science transcends the divides, remaking old technology, and creating the new revolutions of the future. Language will be the currency of these innovations, and this publication offers a wealth of knowledge for the future.