

## EDITORIAL PREFACE

# Technology and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Business Processes

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Through articles on the integration of technology into a wide range of business process, the issue makes clear how essential technology has become for organizational success. Included in this issue are articles showing the power of technology to facilitate manufacturing, project management, collaboration, inventory control, organizational relationships, and strategic planning. Each article provides evidence from major organizations to demonstrate the critical role information technology plays in the 21<sup>st</sup> century global marketplace.

The issue begins with an article focusing on understanding how a “hybrid organization” (formed from the strategic alliance of Renault and) uses Web 2.0 tools and social networking to collaborate both inside traditional organizational boundaries within alliance, and across geographical frontiers. In the article, *Different perspectives on KM 2.0 new practices and web 2.0 tools at Renault-Nissan alliance since 2000*, Diadj divides the history of the strategic alliance into three phases. The first phase of three years entailed Renault and Nissan relying mostly on their individual KM practices and processes. During the second phase, which began in 2004, the automobile manufacturers developed KM

2.0 and web 2.0 tools which increased collaboration between the two companies. Since 2011, the alliance has entered a third phase in which further collaboration and collaborative tools have been developed plus the alliance seems to be attaining a new level of maturity.

Next, in *From Entrepreneur to Big Player: A Case Study of a Software Company in Taiwan*, Shaw, Shih, Fu, and Tsai describe how the software industry is facing rapidly changing technology and business operations. The authors employ an ex post facto research case study design to examine how the Galaxy Software Service Co. grew over a twenty five year period into a large software company in the Taiwanese software market which consists mainly of small and medium-sized businesses. The research was based on in-depth participation and interviews to acquire data on the company’s internal operations along with the evolution of the business model from the company’s inception until now.

In *CSF Approach for IT Planning*, Baporikar describes how the Critical Success Factor (CSF) method and future scenario planning can aid in strategic planning. The article provides a comprehensive framework for enhancing

strategic planning by assisting organizations in integrating the interrelated elements that impact IT strategy development. Not only does the paper synthesize theory and research in strategic planning and CSFs, it provides insights and lessons on the value and limitations in the IT context of the integrated strategic planning as presented in the article. The article provides an in-depth literature review, a contextual analysis, and recommendations for future work including exploration of the use of IT for unit-level planning and organizational strategic planning, creation of an integrated strategic planning process, and connection of CSFs directly to one another in the monitoring stages.

Biswas, Tandon, and Vaish describe the value of CASE Tools as an advanced technique in development of quality products and the associated high costs and steep learning curves. These factors make the evaluation and selection of CASE tools very important. The authors describe a methodology for identifying and selecting the best CASE tools for a particular purpose along with a model that produces an optimised score card and supports the decision making process.

Finally, Iromuanya, Hargiss, and Howard present a procurement risk management model for infrastructure and construction development projects within the context of dynamic, complex, and/or chaotic project environments. The study incorporates observations and theory with practical application for improving initiatives by emergency infrastructure development response organizations including FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) and USACE (US Army Corps of Engineers) in the United States, the NEMA (National Emergency Management Agency) in Nigeria, or ANDMA (Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority) etc. Risk response plans are described which are aimed at improving the likelihood of positive risks while reducing negative risks. The study focuses on project risk management along with the “triple project constraints” related to material, skilled labor, and equipment procurement strategies. The article identifies gaps within the approaches of national and multinational and provides recommendations for process improvements.

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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).