

EDITORIAL PREFACE

Competitive Advantage and Strategy: From Local Applications to Space Exploration

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This issue shows the diversity and range of strategic implementations of information technology. The issue begins with an article by Korkpoe and Nyarku which investigates why IT firms in mature stages find innovation difficult to achieve. Their article assesses reviews relevant literature on how these firms can build cultures that promote innovation and explore possible growth strategies. The article proposes a new conceptual framework to formulate survival strategies and diagrammatically represents the framework.

The issue continues with Baporikar's proposal of a method for crafting eBusiness strategy aimed at enabling businesses, especially small and medium size businesses (SME's), to formulate these strategies. The strategies also aim at encouraging effective use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to maximize competitive advantage

Iromuanya, Hargiss, and Howard explore two construction execution and management models: a model based on evidence-based construction management and another based on a pragmatic approach which considered the context of cultures and emergent or dynamic

circumstances surrounding the project. The study elicited evaluations from two subject matter experts on dynamic construction and infrastructure development areas (one from each Nigeria and Afghanistan). The results showed the limitations of using only numbers for measurement in this context.

Next, in a global marketplace, it is imperative that individuals can communicate effectively in spite of language differences. Johnson and deHaan describe using digitally enhanced Strategic Interaction (SI) sequences (Di Pietro, 1987) to better teach students to learn to speak another language so that their interaction patterns are more realistic. The method incorporates model conversations, digital video technologies, and online wikis to allow students to engage in realistic interactive situations. The authors describe a project for teaching interlanguage pragmatics which is ongoing in a Japanese university context. Preliminary results seem to show that learners in the program are able to use language in more context sensitive ways.

Finally, as our vehicles navigate the universe, we must ensure that our space ships can take off and/or land on planets, sustain life,

support communications to Earth, and maintain convenient speeds. Building on earlier publications, Cuilin describes a method to reduce energy consumption through use of ion jet-engines. The technologies described have the potential to create strategic advantage for companies, countries, and individuals who employ them to navigate space.

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Caroline Howard (PhD) is an author, editor, consultant, and educator. 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). 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.