



EDITORIAL

Time, experience and change

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As I announced in my editorial in the *European Journal of Information Systems* (2003) 12, 167, I have retired, but instead of going part-time, I am a pensioner whose therapy (basket-weaving equivalent) is to go to work and be available to give advice. So I am currently basket-weaving at Brunel University as an Professor Associate and at the London School of Economics as a Visiting Professor. So what can I offer? I have an explanation that I have used freely with my colleagues. The only benefit of getting older as far as I can tell is the gaining of experience, and one of the major if not only benefits of this experience is to pass it on to the less experienced. And to make sure I am listened to, I make the point that if they do not believe this to be true, then they are telling themselves they have no future! This explanation works well, and attentiveness is markedly improved.

Since the *European Journal of Information Systems* (2003) 12, 167 editorial, time has passed (six months), there has been much change, and hence experience has been gained. For example, the *European Journal of Information Systems* has improved its editorial team this year with the acquisition and accession of Richard Baskerville whose editorial in the last issue on An Editor's Values not only proved the astuteness of his acquisition, but also the mastery of his accession. I would like to say that Richard covered my views, but in fact he did better than that! If unread, I recommend it to you (incidentally our online statistics show that editorials are quite popular).

Carolyn Bailey our Editorial Administrator is moving on and is passing the job to Neela Rungien. Carolyn took over the Administration when Bob O'Keefe and I became Editors in 2000. She has cared for and delivered 18 issues of the journal to date, which has involved her in the handling and communication associated with well over 1000 submissions to the journal. And she has managed the Editors! She leaves the *European Journal of Information Systems* fully electronic since taking over a paper-based system and with sound administrative procedures.

Thanks Carolyn.

In this issue, we have papers that also exemplify the theme of time, experience and change. Mlcakova and Whitley investigate the regulatory features of software with regard to peer-to-peer software for MP3 file sharing. While the latter might become history with the rate of technology change, the authors attempt to make sense of a new and possibly transitory topic, leads them to research methodological issues and the introduction of an appropriate approach they call 'impressionism'. I expect 'impressionism' will quickly join the small but improving range of research methods acceptable in information systems. Choudrie and Lee report on a research mission to South Korea and the latter's world leadership in Broadband development. Again this may be transitory, but there are long-term lessons from the study. The experience gained from the study, though, depends to some extent on the maxim 'Where one stands depends on where one sits'. For example, high-density population in urban areas can be viewed as an important enabler

of Korea's success, or as a convenience coincidental to the success of a strategy. Supporters of the 'there-is-nothing-we-can-do' school of hope will attach themselves to the former, and supporters of the 'it-will-happen-if-we-make-it-happen' school to the latter.

Marble's study of the former East Germany's companies having to take on Western Information Systems, and the consequent common lowering of performance illustrates the problems associated with change in a world which does not permit the passage of time necessary to gather sufficient experience. Bruque-Camara *et al.* examine the speed of IT adoption in the pharmaceutical distribution sector, and conclude that intangible factors such as internal low-level communication in the companies, have a major effect. Not easily captured as experience to be used in the future. Mackay *et al.* discuss electronic commerce adoption in the non-commercial world of

small voluntary organisations. Since profit is not a driver, why bother with electronic commerce? The paper suggests that perceptions play a major role in the form of perceived benefits, perceived pressure, and perceived social risk.

Impressionism, perceptions, change without the experience, change open to opinionated interpretation, and intangible factors driving change are brought to the reader in this issue, thus demonstrating that time, experience and change have similar consequences for individuals as well as organisations. Ending, as I started, on a personal note, my Mum recently died (she brought me up from the age of seven years) and I wrote a funeral speech for her overnight after her death. I realised what a remarkable woman she was, which I had not realised until then, when I took the time to study my experiences. In this issue, we have the fruits of finding the time to do such studies.