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Editor's Comments

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EDITOR'S COMMENTS

As you pick up this issue of MISQE, you might want to glance at the page opposite this one. It contains the names of our Senior Editors and Editorial Board – people who make this journal what it is as they volunteer their time to make every submission more insightful and readable. I want to thank all who are listed there for a job well done as we publish our fourth issue this year and, as I noted in the last issue, become truly a Quarterly.

In some cases, the job that our Editors do is fairly easy. A submission arrives which, based on effective academic research (survey data, case studies, etc.), makes a clear and concise addition to our knowledge in an important area. What is more, it is highly readable and clearly written with a CIO or other CXOs in mind. The references to other academic work are there, but they are there in a limited, carefully selected number so that the reader's train of thought is not stopped after every other sentence. Given these conditions, the submission moves quickly through the editing process. The Senior Editor selects two appropriate members of the Editorial Board as reviewers and, in less than a month, they are on the telephone discussing the paper. Soon thereafter, the SE's letter goes out to the author(s) with some suggestions. Upon return, it goes to Barbara McNurlin, who performs her magic that turns an already good paper into a great read.

These are the easy ones. Then there are the submissions that are clearly lacking in some of the attributes noted above but have significant potential. It is for these papers that I watch our SEs, aided by members of the Editorial Board, work with the authors to create an excellent paper from one that clearly has something to say but does not say it in a way that is publishable in MISQE. In our eight issues, there have been many of these papers – papers that have taught me much about the talent and dedication of our Senior Editors and the help they get from the members of Editorial Board. I thank all of you who serve in those roles.

THIS ISSUE

In this issue we are pleased to publish the second- and third-prize winners from the 2004 SIM Paper Awards competition. Interestingly, both deal with the provision of information. In "Continental Airlines Flies High with Real-time Business Intelligence" Ron

Anderson-Lehman and his colleagues tell the story of how Continental vastly improved its standing in the airline industry through effective dissemination of information throughout the organization – at both managerial and operational levels.

In Claudia Loebbecke's article, however, the target for information for the Metro Group is quite different. It is the consumers who buy from the world's fourth largest retailer as they make use of forefront information technology in Metro's Future Store. We are introduced to such technology as "intelligent scales" that, based on a camera and identification software, automatically recognize, price and print out a label for the fruit or vegetables on the scale.

In the Editor's Comment for the previous issue, I suggested that, given today's technology, developing and maintaining "competitive advantage" might not be the proper goal to seek with IT. Our third article in this issue, however, suggests strongly that the days of ongoing competitive advantage may not be over. G. Prem Premkumar and his colleagues in "Sustaining Competitive Advantage through a Value Net: The Case of Enterprise Rent-A-Car" clearly identify a set of circumstances in which sustained competitive advantage appears very possible.

In the fourth article in this issue, we again publish an article from MISQE Digest. In this, as in other "Digest" papers, H. Jeff Smith has reworked his previous academic publications to provide an article targeted to the MISQE audience. "Information Privacy and Its Management" provides a well-organized, well-written overview of very different privacy rules in various parts of the world.

NEW SENIOR EDITOR

It is a pleasure to announce that Bob Zmud, one of the authors in this issue, will join MISQE as a Senior Editor. Bob brings a wealth of academic research and knowledge of the practice of information systems in organizations, to MISQE. Bob has just finished a number of years as Research Director of the Advanced Practices Council of the Society for Information Management (SIM). He will add much to MISQE.