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Message from SIM

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If SIM and *MISQE* were to prepare a "press release" about these four articles, perhaps it would go something like this:

The Society for Information Management (SIM) and their alliance partner, *MISQE*, have jointly announced the publication of four articles showing research findings that will significantly help IT leaders.

1. *Managing the Vendor Set: Achieving Best Pricing and Quality Service in IT Outsourcing* – Many client organizations have come to realize the best way to manage outsourcing is through managing a Vendor Set. This article shows how to manage an optimal number and type of trusted vendor outsourcers using a model that balances market competition and client-vendor collaboration.

2. *The Four Faces of Deploying Global Common Systems: Understanding Global and Local Objectives* – The headquarters of global multi-national companies always like to see common systems applied across all business units. However, the business units within these multi-national companies avoid them like the plague. The researchers use a "four faces" model to describe how British American Tobacco (BAT) implemented MaxFli, which served both global and local needs for the firm's trade marketing and distribution functions. The model describes ways to not only handle the global and local explicit objectives, but the more subtle tacit objectives that are not written down and often not spoken while stakeholders are in the same room.

3. *Enterprise Systems can Help You Address Business Agility Challenges* – Based on research of 57 business agility challenges at 15 corporations, this article prepares a counter-intuitive conclusion that the use of enterprise systems (e.g., ERP, CRM, SaaS) actually improves the ability to make your business agile—as compared to more specific packaged software or home-grown solutions. A great read for anyone debating on whether to continue to go with best-of-breed packages or custom solutions versus leverage a broader enterprise systems approach that tightly links processes and data.

4. *Leveraging Multi-Channel Retailing: The Experience of Tesco.com* – We know how online retailing has taken the industry by storm with examples such as Amazon. Most of us, though, believe that online grocery business opportunities are fledgling, at best. Learn how Tesco, the UK's leading grocery supermarket chain, successfully addressed its industry-specific challenges, to become the biggest and most successful online grocery retailer in the world. Even if you never intend to become an online grocer, this article surely explains how to win in the online retail business.

I hope these descriptions have enticed you to go ahead and read each of these articles! I have thoroughly enjoyed them and believe there is much value to be gained by both the IT practitioner and academic communities.

As an added bonus, you also get to read an APC Forum and SIM Sponsored Article. What a jam-packed issue!

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