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Message from SIM

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MESSAGE FROM SIM

In early October more than 700 attended an informative and enjoyable SIMposium in Atlanta. The program featured thought leaders, CIOs and other interesting speakers and panelists. The winners of the SIM paper competition also presented their paper on knowledge management, which will be published in a future *MISQE* issue.

Since its inception, SIM has brought value to both academic and practitioner members, but in 2011 we would like to build even stronger linkages with the academic community. Our SIM academic leader, Mary Sumner, and I recognize the need to connect more researchers with IT executives for collaboration on case studies and other academic articles. And working with the *MISQE* Editor-in-Chief, Carol Brown, we are committed to increasing *MISQE* appeal and readership among IT executives. Concurrently, we need the help of everyone to encourage more participation in the annual SIM paper competition; look for an announcement about Abstracts due in March. We also welcome your suggestions on how to make SIM membership more attractive to academic members and researchers.

This issue of *MISQE* is timely and informative. Considering the high public profile and rapidly growing popularity of social media, organizations are tempted to take advantage of these social media applications for communications and collaboration, while gaining “legitimacy” as a company with the latest, “cool” technologies. However, as the papers contend, successful implementation and productive usage are more difficult than most organizations anticipate.

All four articles are essential reading for IT managers considering social media platforms, and I highly recommend that those already using these platforms also read this issue. Busy executives without the time to read all four papers in one sitting are advised to first read the survey article introduced in the next paragraph, and then return to the others as soon as time permits.

In the article, “How Large U.S. Companies Can Use Twitter and Other Social Media to Gain Business Value,” Culnan, McHugh, and Zubillaga focus on the challenges companies face when implementing social media applications to interact with customers. Based on examining the use of four social media platforms (blogs, client-hosted forums, Twitter and Facebook) for engaging with customers, the authors contend that

merely launching a company Facebook page does not ensure that value will be created. They argue that three elements are critical to effective implementation—mindful adoption, community building and absorptive capacity. They examine these elements in three interesting case studies of Walmart, Coca Cola and Hewlett-Packard, and they discuss the guidelines for effective implementation of social media in any organization.

In the first paper in this issue (“Social Media and Customer Dialog Management at Starbucks”), Boston College professors Gallagher and Ransbotham describe an in-depth case study of Starbucks, a widely regarded corporate user of social media. The case study identifies the challenges social media introduces and summarizes how to manage the challenges.

The next paper, “Getting Customers’ Ideas to Work for You: Learning from Dell How to Succeed with Online User Innovation Communities,” focuses on the integration of online user communities into the organization’s innovation processes and provides seven recommendations for how to overcome the challenges. Authors DeGangi, Wasko, and Hooker contend that all seven are applicable to other organizations.

“Assimilating Generation Y IT Hires into USAA’s Workforce: The Role of an Enterprise 2.0 System,” focuses on employee assimilation at USAA, a \$17.6 billion insurance company. Authors Leidner, Koch, and Gonzalez describe how an internal system with Web 2.0 tools is used to increase the feeling of cultural belonging for entry-level Generation Y employees and provides guidelines for other organizations considering new employee assimilation initiatives.

With this issue, Ray Hoving has passed the baton for writing the SIM message. As the new Chief Executive of SIM, I am pleased to have this opportunity, and hopeful that I can rise to the high standard he set. Please join me in expressing appreciation to Ray for his service to SIM and *MISQE* and his continued contributions to our Society.

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