2008

Panel: Encircling the Globe: How can an Association of Information Systems Academics be Truly International?

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Encircling the Globe: How can an Association of Information Systems Academics be Truly International?

An ECIS 2008 Panel

AIS was created in 1994 to be an international association right from the start. By the time AIS was formed, the field had already created an international community thanks to many years of International (ICIS) conferences. Today AIS boasts nearly 4,000 members from 81 countries, rotates presidents each year among three world regions, includes two representatives from each region, and sponsors 18 country chapters and 29 SIGs. AISWorld, a global resource offered by AIS, has twenty- or language-specific pages. Of six AIS-affiliated organizations, four are based in other countries and one is international. This provides strong evidence that AIS is truly an international community.

However, as much as the international group that forms AIS Council tries hard to remind the community that it is not a North American association, it suffers from lower membership and involvement from outside the Americas than it hopes. The number of IS academics worldwide is more evenly distributed than AIS memberships. Only 19.7% of AIS members come from Region 2 and 17.4% from Region 3. This evidence of the global nature of AIS is unfortunately not so strong.

The international group of panelists will address important questions about whether AIS has not tried hard enough, or if its efforts are targeted incorrectly. We will also explore how to motivate the academics in Regions 2 and 3 to join and become active in AIS.

Panel Members

Moderator: Dennis Galletta, president of AIS (USA)

Tentative Panelists (in alphabetical order):
- Guillermo Rodriguez Abitia (Mexico)
- Wendy Currie (UK)
- Cathy Urquhart (NZ)

Questions for the Panelists:

1. How do you believe AIS has done in its quest to be truly an international association? Regarding "being international:" Please provide examples of where AIS has done particularly well and examples of where AIS has not done well.
2. Volunteers are very difficult to come by in some areas. How far can AIS go to "become international" in areas where local volunteers are scarce? Can we provide better incentives for them?
3. Can we ever be truly international with English as the official language of AIS? What realistic scenario do you envision for handling issues of language?
4. What advice do you have for AIS in expanding its international reach?
5. What questions are we failing to ask regarding internationalizing AIS?

Bios of the Moderator and Panelists:

Dennis Galletta (moderator) is President of AIS, is an AIS Fellow, and is Professor of Business Administration at the Katz Graduate School of Business, University of Pittsburgh, where he has been since 1985 except for the 2004-2005 academic year he spent as Professor of Information Systems at the Fox School of Business and Management, Temple University. He obtained his doctorate in 1985 at the University of Minnesota (major advisor: Gordon B. Davis) with a major in management information systems and a minor in psychology. He teaches Human-Computer Interaction to PhD, MBA, and undergraduate students, Information Systems to MBA students and executives, and Electronic Commerce to MBA students and executives. His specific research interests lie in the areas of end-user attitudes, behavior, and performance. He has published articles in journals such as *Management Science, Information Systems Research, Journal of MIS, Journal of AIS, Communications of the ACM, European Journal of Information Systems, Decision Sciences, Communications of the AIS, Accounting Management and Information Technologies,* and *Data Base,* and also published a COBOL textbook with Prentice-Hall. He is, or has been, on the editorial boards of journals such as *Information Systems Research*, *Canadian Journal of Administrative Science*, *Data Base*, *Journal of AIS*, *International Journal of Information Systems and Management*, *Information Systems and eBusiness Management*, *Cycle Time Research*, and *MIS Quarterly*. He also served as editor of *SIGOIS Bulletin,* the newsletter of the ACM Special Interest Group on Office Information Systems. He is also an active reviewer for 10 other journals and several conferences. He and Ping Zhang recently edited two books on HCI in MIS, part of the Zwass *Advances in MIS* series. They were fortunate to have gotten 37 fine manuscripts from 72 authors, most who require no introduction. He served as co-program chair of ICIS 2005 with David Avison and is preparing to co-chair ICIS 2011 in Shanghai. For a recent AMCIS conference in August 2003, he served as co-program chair with Jeanne Ross. He was the Editor-In-Chief of ISWorld (2002-2007). He served as the ICIS Treasurer from 1994-1998, chaired the Inaugural AIS Americas Conference on Information Systems in 1995, was VP of Member Services for AIS from 2001-2003, was a member of AIS Council representing the Americas in 1996 and 1997, and taught information systems courses on the Fall 1999 voyage of Semester at Sea.

Guillermo Rodriguez Abitia is director of the Centre for Development of Information Technologies and Electronics at Technologico de Monterrey in Mexico City, Mexico. He specializes in systems development, databases, and administration of computing centers. He has published numerous refereed papers and has been the lead figure in Internationalizing AIS into Mexico. He is a former Fulbright Scholar and has served as director of numerous computing centers since 1989. His dissertation (UT Arlington) focused on International Technology Transfer.

Wendy Currie is Professor of Information Systems at Warwick Business School, the University of Warwick. She is previously Professor in Information Systems at Brunel and Sheffield universities. She is principal Investigator of EPSRC and ESRC (Paccit/Link) funded research into e-business models and emerging technologies. She currently serves on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Information Technology; Journal of Strategic Information Systems; Journal of Change Management* and *the Journal of Enterprise Information Management.* She formally served as Associate Editor for *Management Information Systems Quarterly* and the *European Journal of Information Systems.* She has also served on the editorial boards for special issues in *MIS Quarterly* and *Information Systems Research.* She served as European, Middle East and Africa representative for the Association for Information Systems, and is currently joint Conference Chair for the International Conference on Information Systems to be held in Arizona in 2009. Her research is published in the information systems and management journals and she works with several 'blue chip' companies on various research projects. She is currently working with the UK National Health Service and the Compliance Institute on ICT adoption and diffusion.

Cathy Urquhart is a Senior Lecturer in Information Systems at the Department of Information Systems and Operations Management at the University of the Auckland, New Zealand. Before coming to New Zealand in 2001, she worked at the Universities of Tasmania, Melbourne and the Sunshine Coast in Australia. She worked as a systems analyst for eight years in public sector computing in the U.K, where she developed her interest in analyst-client communication and how requirements are formulated. Her current major research interest is the impact of ICTs on developing countries. She is also interested in the implementation of ERP systems in organisations. She has a strong interest in qualitative data analysis, especially the use of grounded theory in information systems. She is the co convenor of the University Qualitative Research Group which meets weekly each semester. She is an Associate Editor for MIS Quarterly. She is a member of IFIP 8.2 Working Group on Information Systems and Organizations, and IFIP 9.4 Working Group on the Social Implications of Computers in Developing Countries. She is Vice President for Special Interest Groups and Member Services of the Association for Information Systems. In April 2008, her extensive contributions were recognized when she became an AIS Featured Volunteer.