

## EDITORIAL PREFACE

### **E-NABLED BUSINESS: INTERNET AND WEB APPLICATIONS, THEIR VALUE FOR CUSTOMERS, AND USER SATISFACTION IN AN INTERNET- ENABLED WORKPLACE**

**RAJIV KISHORE, The State University of New York at Buffalo**

*School of Management, Tel: +1 (716) 645-3507, Fax: +1 (716) 645-6117, E-mail: [rkishore@buffalo.edu](mailto:rkishore@buffalo.edu)*

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This issue contains three articles that all focus on the Internet- and web-enabled business and the workplace, what I call an “E-nabled Business.” While the phenomenon of e-business has gradually started becoming ubiquitous and more deeply-embedded within everyday organizational life, despite the dot.com “meltdown” and the collapse of the Internet sector during the last two years, there is much to learn about Internet and web applications, their value for customers, and user satisfaction in an Internet-enabled workplace. The papers in this issue are quite interesting and relevant because these are precisely the aspects of Internet- and web-enabled business that they focus upon.

The first paper “An Exploratory Study of Web-based Electronic Commerce Applications” by Magal, Feng, and Essex is an insightful piece of empirical research that explores the use of the web in e-commerce applications and develops a framework for classifying those applications. The authors examine thirty common e-commerce applications using three commonly known models of organizations – the functional organization

perspective, the process organization perspective, and the value chain organizational model – and find that the value chain organizational model provides the best schema for classification of e-commerce applications. The authors evaluate their framework further with the observed e-commerce applications from a random sample of Fortune 500 firms and find that adoption of particular e-commerce applications within these firms can be explained both by the nature of the industry and the nature of the application. Because this paper studies a random sample from Fortune 500 companies, it provides a good benchmark for small- and medium-sized firms about the way in which Internet and the web can be utilized fruitfully to “e-enable” the various components of their value chains.

The second paper “A Framework for Analyzing Customer Value of Internet Business” by Han and Han is a conceptual piece of research that synthesizes knowledge in the strategy, marketing, e-business, and quality management areas and develops a new framework for understanding and analyzing customer value in the context of Internet- and web-enabled e-business. Their customer value framework consists of two key dimensions – value component and value improvement direction. The authors propose that value in an e-business

context can be provided to customers either through the content of the business transaction or through its context, or through a combination of the two. The authors also suggest that three distinct value improvement mechanisms can be used to enhance customer value in an e-business environment, these mechanisms being quality enhancement, cost reduction, and customization. The authors further provide some specific measures for each of the six cells of their two-dimensional framework. This is an insightful paper that can not only be used by businesses to evaluate and benchmark the value they are providing to their customers from their e-business endeavors, but it also opens up some new research questions about the relationships among the key constructs of this new framework and their impact on overall user satisfaction from e-business applications.

The third paper in this issue “User Satisfaction in the Internet-Anchored Workplace: An Exploratory Study” by Simmers and Anandarajan is another piece of empirical research. This paper reports the results of a study of the relationships among user behaviors and demographics, Internet user satisfaction, and Internet-induced job satisfaction. The authors collected data from a random sample of 3,000 undergraduate alumni of a university in the northeastern United States. They find that respondents who report higher levels of user satisfaction with the Internet also report that the Internet has increased their satisfaction with their jobs. The authors also find age, Internet training, Internet experience, and Internet usage to be significant predictors of Internet user satisfaction. However, Internet experience was found to be the only significant correlate of Internet-induced job satisfaction. Managers will find the results of this research to be quite relevant to their endeavors of improving user satisfaction in new work environments, of which the Internet and the web are now an integral part.

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I hope you all enjoy reading the excellent articles contained in this issue as much as we have enjoyed putting them together for this issue of JITTA.