Editorial

MINI-THEME ISSUE: BUSINESS PROCESS REENGINEERING

Future theme issues

The Journal intends a further theme issue for September 1995. This will deal with IT outsourcing: theory and practice. The editors will be Mary C. Lacity of the University of Missouri and Leslie Willcocks of Oxford University. The editors invite authors to submit three copies of any intended paper to the editorial office by 24 March 1995. Guidelines for submissions are available on the back page of every copy of the Journal. The theme issue editors also intend to produce a book on the subject of IT outsourcing. Authors with suitable material are invited to contact one of the editors through the editorial office in the first instance. Ideas for further themes are always welcome; please contact Leslie Willcocks.

Forthcoming conferences

We have been asked to offer details of several forthcoming conferences. Full details of the Third European Conference on Information Systems are available on another page of this issue. This is a conference, that the Journal helped to found and which will continue to be supported actively by it, not least through promotion and offering publishing opportunities. The conference is in Athens from 1-3 June 1995. An important date is that for the submission of papers: 30 November 1994. The conference contact is Professor Georgios Doukidis at Athens University of Economics and Business.

The Journal is also supporting The Evaluation of Information Technology conference to be held at Henley Management College, UK, 11-12 July 1995. The paper submissions deadline is 17 February 1995. The programme chair is Ann Brown, IS Division, City University Business School, Barbican Centre, London EC1V 0HB. Finally a conference is being held at University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa 3-4 July 1995. It is called Information Technology and Development. The paper submission deadline is 13 January 1995. Further details from Frances Sutherland, Department of IS, University of Witwatersrand, PO Box Wits, 2050, Johannesburg, South Africa.

This issue: Business Process Reengineering (BPR)

Not surprisingly, we have received many papers on this subject over the past two years, and this quarter we have put together three of these, together with conference and book reviews, to form a small theme issue. The paper by Chris Edwards and Jo Peppard provides a well written overview guide to the topic and the issues it regularly generates. They focus on six major related themes, then derive 20 major lessons for practitioners from their own research and that of others.

Kirk Fiedler and his colleagues then provide a complementary paper from the USA. They examine the risks and rewards of process redesign allied with IT-enabled change. In particular their research is based around a model that relates the risks and rewards of cross-functional and intra-functional IT-enabled BPR. They found that organizations carrying out IT-enabled BPR are more likely to initiate cross-functional IT-enabled BPR and to be more satisfied with their efforts than those organizations that carry out intra-functional IT-enabled BPR. The latter also tend to be less interested in increasing their subsequent BPR efforts. Several other interesting conclusions are arrived at, and the paper allows some interesting comparisons to be made with the UK scene represented in the two other papers.

The paper by John Kawalek brings a further perspective on BPR, looking at the issues through a sociological/organizational analysis lens, and pulls out coordinative and cooperative working issues. Kawalek positions the BPR debate in the context of management research generally, then uses a case study in Lotus Notes implementation to discuss the issues he has identified as significant. Finally he offers a framework for reexamining BPR and the portfolio of IS application types in terms of the degree of user orientation and control within the context of the degree of centralization.

This issue includes one other paper. This paper revisits the field of executive IS. Readers will recall two recent papers on this subject – 'Moving from an executive information system to everyone's information system' (Wheeler et al., September 1993), and 'Use of EIS in measuring business performance' (Holohan, September 1992). The present paper by Brian Fitzgerald and Ciaran Murphy reviews previous research on EIS and reasons advanced for its introduction into organizations. Their own four case studies belie many of the normal reasons advanced, in fact. Two strong findings are that IS department 'push' and what the authors call 'EIS envy' played a significant role in the emergence of EIS in the organizations studied.
Forthcoming papers include

Predicting bankruptcy via induction. Thomas McKee.
Learning from abandoned IS development projects.
Kweku Ewusi-Mensah and Zbigniew Przasnyski.
Organizing for crisis response. Linda Jo Calloway and Peter Keen.
Implementing multiple tutoring strategies in an intelligent tutoring system for music learning.
Marios Angelides and Amelia Tong.

A methodology for the evaluation of information technology for strategic implementation. Steve Elliot.
The profit impact of IT investment. Sam Lubbe, Gary Parker and Andrew Hoard.
Computerization of general practice in the UK primary health care sector: the IT perspective. Alan Gillies.
Information technology and organizational design.
Michael Stebbins, James Sena and A. B. (Rani) Shani.
Anticipating the benefits of proposed information systems. Albert Lederer and Rajesh Mirani.