

EDITORIAL

This is the second issue of volume 4 of the Australian Journal of Information Systems. It is a little larger than the normal issues as we have included a special issue section dealing with the question of ethics. As Editor, I am pleased to report the on-going interest in the journal, both from authors and more recently from a number of international conferences who have kindly agreed to advertise the journal to their participants. In this issue we have 15 articles, 8 from Australia, 1 from Canada, 2 from the United Kingdom, and one each from France, Israel, Finland and New Zealand.

Our first paper - 'The effects of Normalisation on the Satisfaction of Novice End-Users Querying Database' - by Conrad Benedict, Paul Bowen, Colin Ferguson and Fiona Rhode, Department of Commerce, University of Queensland - reports on the results of an experiment which investigated the effects of different structural characteristics on satisfaction by end-users. The results showed that unnormalised tables adversely affect end-user satisfaction.

The second paper - 'Standardising the Information Technology Environment at Telstra Corporation: A Case Study' - by Carey Butler & Peter Weill, Key Centre for Technology Management, Melbourne University - traces the development of Telstra's data network and desktop SOEs. The paper examines the strategic drivers for the SOEs, the business benefits, and issues related to Telstra's computing environment prior to, and after the introduction of network and desktop SOEs.

Our third paper - 'Reassessing Function Points' - by G.R. Finnie, G.E. Wittig, School of Information Technology, Bond University & J.M. Desharnais, Software Engineering Laboratory in Applied Metrics, Anjou, Canada - reviews the validity of the weighting scheme and the value of adjusting for system characteristics by studying their effect in a sample of 299 software developments. The paper suggests that weighting scheme used to adjust system components in terms of being simple, average or complex appear suspect and should be redesigned to provide a more realistic estimate of system functionality.

Dan Hawthorn, Department of Information Systems and Computing, Unitec Institute of Technology, New Zealand & Ananth Srinivasan, Department of Management Science and Information Systems, University of Auckland, New Zealand contribute a paper entitled - 'Revisiting the Usability of Graphical Displays: An Experimental Approach' - The paper reports on the results of an experimental study of the usability of graphical displays for decision making. The authors found that assisting users to extract information from graphs with design features such as a mouse driven display has a significantly positive effect on performance.

Our next paper - 'Evolution of OO Methods: The Unified Case' - Matti Rossi, Department of Computer Science and Information Systems, University of Jyväskylä - takes an evaluative look into OO methods and especially the evolution of the new Unified method from its ancestors, OMT and OODA. The paper tries to classify the components of earlier methods and shows how the metrics can be used to analyse the changes in the techniques.

The next paper - 'Conceptual Data Modelling: An Empirical Study of Expert and Novice Data Modellers' - by Graeme Shanks, Department of Information Systems, Monash University - explores the differences between conceptual data models designed by expert and novice data modelling practitioners. The data models are evaluated using a number of quality factors synthesised from previous empirical studies and frameworks for quality in conceptual modelling. The study finds that data models produced by expert data modellers are more correct, complete, innovative and flexible than those produced by novices.

Peretz Shoval, Information Systems Program, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel contributes a paper entitled - 'Experimental Comparisons of Entity-Relationship and Object-Oriented Data Models'. This paper addresses the issue of which of the two data models is better for data modeling. The results reveal that, amongst other things: a) schema comprehension: ternary relationships are significantly easier to comprehend in the EER model than in the OO model & b) the EER model surpasses the OO model for designing unary and ternary relationships.

The next paper - 'An Investigation of Information Technology-Enabled Remote Management and Remote Work Issues' - by D. Sandy Staples, Department of Information Systems, University of Melbourne - investigates remote work and remote management issues. The findings supported that higher trust leads to higher job satisfaction and lower job stress, and that more communication between the manager and the remote employee develops higher levels of employee organizational commitment.

Mohan Thite & Pamela Simmons, Swinburne University of Technology contribute a paper entitled - 'An Empirical Examination of Project Leadership in an Information Systems Environment'. This study examines the most appropriate leadership style at the project management level for the successful execution of IS projects. The results support the proposition that there is a difference in the leadership styles of more and less successful project managers as perceived by their subordinates and that the successful managers exhibit significantly more of Transformational leadership characteristics.

The next paper - 'The Tasks of Information Systems Professionals in Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia' - by Graham Winley, Ang Ang & Sim Lau, Department of Business Systems University of

Wollongong - presents the results of an empirical study into the present and future tasks expected of information systems professionals in a range of organisations in South-east Asian nations. The results are related to the present and expected future profiles of these organisations and are of relevance to those responsible for developing IS curricula in academic institutions as well as commercial providers of education and training courses in these important South-east Asian nations.

The next paper - 'Structure and Extensions of the User Information Satisfaction Construct' - by Clive Wrigley, Faculty of Business, Simon Fraser University, Don Drury, Faculty of Management, McGill University & Ali Farhoomand, School of Business, University of Hong Kong - investigates the application of the UIS instrument across a number of key variables including respondent characteristics. Several findings emerge from a survey of 379 IS and non-IS managers: First, the UIS factors are stable and generalizable. Second, the level of satisfaction varies quite substantially when compared to prior UIS reports, although the IS product satisfaction dominates. Third, IS managers, not surprisingly, evaluate their systems significantly higher than non-IS managers, indicating the importance of stakeholders in evaluating Information Systems success.

Simon Rogerson, Centre for Computing and Social Responsibility, De Montfort University, provides the introduction to the section involved with the question of ethics. His short introduction entitled - 'Ethics and Information Technology' - provides an introduction to the topic.

The first of the papers concerned with ethics comes from Duncan Langford, Computing Laboratory, The University, Canterbury, UK. His paper is entitled - 'Ethical Issues in Network System Design'. The paper discusses some ways in which the technical design of computer systems might appropriately be influenced by ethical issues, and examine pressures on computer scientists and others to technically control network-related actions perceived as 'unethical'.

Emma Rooksby & Diarmuid Pigott, Murdoch University provide the next paper entitled - 'Living with the Internet: Ethics in the Noösphere' - which gives a holistic alternative to the conventional ground of existent ethical discourse on the Internet. The paper suggests that the model of the net is unsatisfactory and present a discourse of co-operative ethics, based on a model of the Internet as a Noetic Hyper Entity.

Daniel Salber, University of Grenoble presents the final paper entitled - 'The Need for an Applied Computer Ethics Handbook'. This paper contends that new advances in computer science disciplines such as communications networks and mobile devices are suggesting radically new uses of information technology.

Through the use of existing ethical frameworks such as Mason's PAPA or Huff's ImpactCS he suggests that information technology practitioners need more explicit tools such as handbooks to help them understand and deal with ethical issues.

Once again I would like to pass on my thanks to the authors and consulting editors for the high quality of material in this issue. I would also like to thank David Dodds for his assistance in producing final copy of the journal and the maintenance of the Home page.

R. MacGregor
Editor