Editorial

This edition of the Journal will be the last in its present form. The AIT Committee and the Editorial Board have discussed a number of changes to format and content, and these will begin in the March 1990 edition of the Journal, and be fully completed by the December 1990 issue. The changes have been designed to build on the existing strengths of the JIT. The presentation of the Journal will change in a number of significant ways. We will also be extending the Editorial Board still further. There are a number of other developments which have been agreed upon, and we feel certain that the result will be an ever better Journal for the reader. One feature will be the reintroduction of theme issues. The December 1990 issue will be devoted to the theme of 'The Evaluation of Information System Investments'. It may be useful at this point to invite contributions to this issue. These may be in the form of refereed papers or personal viewpoints, but must follow the guidelines laid down on the back page of this issue. Please send your proposed title and a synopsis of the paper to the Editors by April 23rd 1990. Completed papers will be required by the Editors by June 11th 1990 at the latest, to enable refereeing and possible redrafting.

The Annual Conference for the Association for Information Technology is being held in early January 1990, and has attracted a large number of participants. It has also attracted a range of very good papers, and a selection of these will be further refereed and appear in Volume 5 Number 1 of the Journal.

This issue

The present issue contains a number of interesting papers on diverse themes. The first contribution is a position paper by Professor Clive Holtham who is Bull HN Professor of Information Management at City University Business School. The paper is a revised and developed version of the lecture the author presented to the Annual General Meeting of the AIT in the Summer of 1989. Those who

attended the AGM will recall a highly pertinent and well-illustrated lecture that generated lively debate and many informed contributions from the audience. Clive Holtham has retained some of this feel in his written version, and has developed some of his original ideas in the light of the discussion on that day.

Professor Holtham points to IT as being a major and genuine Twentieth Century innovation that offers massive opportunities into the 1990s despite the sense of disappointment often discovered in many 1980s' reviews of senior managers' attitudes to IT. One problem may be that the IT industry has too often oversold itself. The paper considers likely developments in technology and the paths which the IT industry could, and should, take. Holtham then pinpoints four major challenges for the IT industry, the managers of IT in companies and other organisations, as well as general managers. The challenges are deliberately very managerial, as opposed to technical, in nature and consist of: developing strategies, creating alliances, avoiding misalliances and how to convert ideas into action. The whole paper represents a well informed and thoroughly up-to-date thinking through of possible IT futures, and those who missed the lecture, or wish to be reminded of its contents, will certainly want to read this.

The second paper, on Case Requirements for Data-Centred Business Applications, offers an account of the important features that should form part of a CASE environment where it is to be used in data-centred business applications. The paper is particularly strong on its advocacy of tools and approaches for estimating, costing, project and configuration management with changeable rules, an integrated project/system dictionary semantic data modelling, and different development and runtime environments with the system dictionary active during development. Given the considerable hesitation and uncertainty about the future with CASE (see for example the review of the Third International Workshop on CASE at Imperial

College, UK, in JIT Vol. 4 No. 3), this paper by Graham Tate, June Verner and Richard Hayward represents a carefully considered, timely and constructive contribution to the problem of how CASE can be used in practical ways in organisations.

Dr Daniel Lee has provided a useful, highly technical paper. His major concern is to integrate data modelling techniques with knowledge representation methodologies. He first outlines why such integration needs to be pursued. He proceeds by providing an informative overview of a range of Decision Support Systems and Expert Systems, and then conducts a comparative analysis of the techniques and methodologies they employ in order to derive a unifying data model. In the final part of the paper Lee uses several integrated systems to demonstrate the usefulness of the data model he has derived. Professor Ivan Jackson's paper is concerned with another type of integration and more managerial issues. His major purpose is to suggest ways in which planning for Information Services can be conducted so that both computing and business problems are managed in an integrated manner. After establishing the major problems commonly encountered in aligning IS with business plans, Jackson offers some very pertinent and practical approaches to the problems identified. The final paper in this issue, by Claire Marston, Rob Dixon and Paul Collier, helps in counteracting

the shortage of research information, in the UK at least, on the role of internal auditors in the prevention and detection of computer fraud. The research findings make salutary reading for anyone thinking that computer fraud is an easy area to control, that organisations are well set up to prevent and detect such fraud, and that the problems described are likely to decrease in the future.

Thus the Journal this month provides rich and varied material for your reading. As if this were not enough it also includes a detailed report on an October 1989 conference called 'Measuring the Value of IT Investments', held in London. IT evaluation has emerged from many surveys as a significant area of managerial concern and attention, and the conference report reveals highly relevant contributions by academics and practitioners alike, including from one of our own Honorary Editors, Paul Strassmann. This report is reinforced by a book review of *Information Economics*, in which the authors have attempted, largely successfully, to extend considerably traditional cost/benefit analysis approaches to measuring IT investments. These are two other book reviews to complete this edition of the JIT.

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