Editorial

This quarter sees the retirement of Anne Leeming as the Editor-in-Chief of the Journal. Anne took on the Journal together with the Chair of the Association for Informational Technology in early 1989. She was responsible for setting the new Journal policy and has overseen radical changes to the way the Journal looks, the refereeing policy, and its content. The Journal is now recognized as one of the leading European journals in its field. Both the Journal and the Association have much to thank Anne for, in taking on and working at tasks that looked difficult but needed to be done. I would also like to thank Anne personally for asking me to work with her and take on the executive editor role, which, together with her role, has been both taxing and stimulating as we have endeavoured to move the Journal on over the last six years.

As mentioned in last quarter's editorial, a number of developments to build the Journal's service are in preparation. The Journal has operated with a 15% acceptance rate for refereed papers in the last three years and this was only achieved by a considerable amount of administration. The Journal is in the process of extending the Executive Editorial team to several Editors, each one responsible for a region. Leslie Willcocks will operate as the Executive Editor of the Journal and all papers should continue to be submitted to him in the first instance through the Templeton College, Oxford editorial address. We have seen a big expansion in the number of papers received, and resultant delays in the refereeing and acceptance/rejection process. These delays need to be minimized if the published articles are to remain current and topical in a very fast moving field. From September 1995 we are going to aim for a maximum turnaround time of four months for all submitted papers. We are also looking to expand the size of the Journal and are reassessing the policy of the Journal in terms of subject coverage. Future editorials will keep readers abreast of the changes as they happen.

Theme issue and conferences

As announced in the previous issue (Volume 10, No. 1) the Journal is to publish a theme issue dealing with IT Outsourcing: Theory and Practice. The editors are Mary C. Lacity of the University of Missouri and Leslie P. Willcocks of Oxford University. This theme issue is now scheduled for December 1995. We have had an excellent response to the call for papers and readers can look forward to a stimulating edition of the Journal. While the date for submission of papers for the theme issue is long past, authors wishing to contribute to an edited book on the subject should contact the theme issue editors through the editorial office. Ideas for further themes and guest editors are always welcome – please contact Leslie Willcocks.

A detailed review of a recent conference on Management Challenges in Information Systems is provided by Joe Peppard of Cranfield, where the event was held. The conference was supported by the AIT and Journal, amongst others. We have been asked to offer details of several forthcoming conferences. The Journal supports The Second Evaluation of Information Technology conference to be held at Henley Management College, UK, 11–12 July 1995. Programme chair is Ann Brown at City University Business School, Barbican Centre, London EC2Y 8HB. A conference is being held at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, 3–4 July 1995. It is called Information Technology and Development. Further details from Frances Sutherland, Department of IS, University of the Witwatersrand, PO Box Wits, 2050, Johannesburg, South Africa.

A particularly interesting event for PhD students is the annual PhD Colloquium being held this year from 2–4 July at Bath University. The contact is Professor David Targett at the School of Management, Bath University, Claverton Down, Bath, UK. For those seeking a flavour of the event, a review by John Ward of last year's Colloquium is provided in this issue of the Journal. It was held at Cranfield University.

This issue

The Journal continues to publish papers on a wide range of subjects. The first paper, by Judy Wynekoop and Nancy Russo questions how much we really know about systems development methodologies, how they are operationalized and with what success. They make some cogent criticisms of how research has been conducted and provide discussion of ways forward. The second paper, by Alan Gillies, reviews how far IT has been introduced into the offices and work of general practitioners in UK health care. The author provides much needed detail on implementation in a particular sector, and uncovers a range of problems and issues that still need to be addressed.

Our remaining three papers address issues which are more conventionally managerial in focus. Steve Elliott

and Peter Melhuish take on the problematic area of IT evaluation. They review current methodologies for assessment and adoption of IT at a strategic level, and then advance their own detailed methodology. They ground their methodology by providing a case study of its application in a multinational manufacturer of computer-based process control equipment. Michael Stebbins, James Sena and Rami Shani deal with IT's relationship to organizational design. They too provide a useful, critical review of the current approaches, then take the debate further by examining how the organizational design process can be developed further. They provide a topical paper on how IT can support, and be imbedded in, emerging organizational forms. The final paper is by Narender Ramarapu and Augustine Lado. They revisit the question: how does IT really contribute to competitive advantage? In the context of linking IT to global business strategy, they put forward a contingency analysis of how IT relates to key sources of competitive advantage.

Forthcoming papers include

The responsiveness of IT to business strategy formulation: an empirical study. Felix Tan

Organizing for crisis response. Linda Jo Calloway and Peter Keen.

Anticipating the benefits of proposed information systems. Albert Lederer and Rajesh Mirani.

Information architectural design in business process reengineering. William Kettinger, James Teng and Subashish Guha.

IS innovation and organizational alignment. Janice Burn.

Participation in the development of interorganizational systems. Angele Cavaye.

Information architectural design in business process reengineering. William Kettinger, James Teng and Subashish Guha.

An information systems profile of the UK manufacturing sector. David Wastell.