

Editorial

I have to admit that I feel a certain irony in taking on the position of Editor-in-Chief for AJIS, given my well known views on the future of academic journals, or rather the lack of a future for them. I know that more than a few of my colleagues will also see this appointment as ironic. And yet, that appearance of irony is just that, an appearance. There is no question that every process in the chain of communicating the results of our research is currently subject to question, and it should be no surprise to us as information systems researchers that once again a disruptive technology is making its effects felt. I am not going to go into the details of my views on that particular issue, I am currently working on a paper looking at those technological changes and their effects.

The point I would like to make, is that times of radical change are dangerous times. They offer huge potential for experimenting with new and different possibilities that are enabled by the changes. Some of these experiments, such as the Wide Area Information Service (WAIS), fail as new technical advances are made, others fail as business models render them uncompetitive. Arguably many of the paper based publishing models are falling into that category. If we look at academic publishing, even many of the open access electronic publication models simply translate existing models into the new online environment with minimal changes. In the 1990s we used to talk of “gold plating the cow paths” when this was done in many business implementations.

In 1993, in the first issue of AJIS, the foundation Editor-in-Chief, Rob McGregor said “there is a growing respect by the international community towards the research and scholarship that is emanating from Australia.” I have no doubt that sentiment was a motivating factor in establishing AJIS, and it is effectively disseminating that research and raising its profile in Australasia and internationally that has to be the essence of our effort. To deliver this we have to focus on the best ways to achieve it, even if that requires changes to our processes in response to these developments. I believe that my background and understanding of these changes will help navigate AJIS into this new era of academic publishing, in whatever form that may take.

That’s all a long term perspective. In the short term, there are a number of other things I’m working on to improve and raise the profile of the journal. EBSCO Product Managers have nominated the journal for promotion on EBSCO research databases. We are also negotiating with Cengage for a similar arrangement. This will bring greater exposure of articles published by AJIS. We have a Research Notes section in AJIS now.

A Research Note is an article giving a brief description of a breakthrough IS topic or idea. It may also refer to the modification of a methodology, method or associated tool. It should be timely and of interest to AJIS readers. Research notes provide an outlet for publication of information that is relevant and important, but may lack spatial or temporal replication. It should be no more than 2,500 words, and can include two figures or tables. It should have at least eight references. Research notes will also be sent for peer review. Research notes are not designed to serve as an outlet for publication of research that lacks appropriate scope or is better suited for other outlets.

I also want to increase the number and coverage of themed issues. Already Craig Parker has a team preparing papers focused on small and medium sized enterprises for issue 19(1). Future themes include:

- Best papers from the Foundations of Information Systems conference
- Indigenous information systems
- Intelligent Decision Making in Information Technology
- The economic and societal impacts of broadband adoption in rural and regional communities

In this issue we have articles spanning decision support, gender, strategy and the like. Some articles are empirical studies and some are reflective. They are examining issues within Australia, and in the broader region. I hope you find at least one article to interest you. If not, then submit one!

My sincere thanks to my Head of School, Dineli Mather, for her support of my role as Editor-in-Chief, and to AAIS and ACPHIS for the help and support that they have provided for this issue, and the ACS for providing hosting services for the Journal. Not only is their help financial, but also in the support for the Journal that they are fostering in the academic community.

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