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Panel: Developing Teaching Case Studies in Information Systems: Lessons from Experience

Chair: David Keane

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Abstract-The purpose of this panel is to explore the issues involved in developing effective case study materials for classroom use.

I. DESCRIPTION

Case studies are widely used as a medium for information systems as they allow the instructor to create a rich and challenging learning environment that simulates reality. Cases are particularly suited to post-graduate courses such as MBAs and other executive programmes where students must take on the role of “decision maker.”

For many instructors however, there are significant obstacles to developing effective case materials. Among these are: problems in getting access to good quality case sites; challenges in protecting confidentiality, developing a writing style that brings the case to life; and obtaining the final release to use the case in the classroom.

Jim McKeen will open the discussion by outlining the reasons why a teacher of information systems may want to consider developing their own case materials. In this discussion, Jim will outline the pedagogical advantages of using your own cases and how you can establish a planning process to ensure that your efforts contribute to building a “portfolio” of cases that can be used in different ways.

David Keane will provide a 3-phase process for developing cases. Phase 1 of this process involves a preliminary meeting to quickly identify “the topic of the case” and to determine if a good candidate case exists. Phase 2 covers the collection and synthesis of interview data that is reliable and comprehensive. Phase 3 deals with the preparation and sign-off of the draft case study.

Mike Wade will address the operational aspects of writing up cases. In his discussion Mike will deal with such issues as: the mechanics of recording case interviews; choosing a suitable writing style; and the establishment of template standards and conventions.

Sid Huff, the author of more than 50 cases, will focus his discussion on the strategies available to case authors once the case is written. Sid will comment on: preparing the case for classroom use; obtaining final release of the case; the development of additional materials such as teaching notes, videos and CD’s; and how to get cases published so that can be used by other academics.

Finally a facilitated discussion will allow the audience to comment on the presentations and share their own experience of developing case study materials.

II. PANEL MEMBERS

Jim McKeen is a Professor and Director of the Queen’s Centre for Knowledge Based Enterprises at Queen’s University, Canada. Jim is among the premier researchers and educators in the application of management information systems in business and industry. He is a recognized authority on the advanced study of management use of technology and has developed many case studies. He facilitates the networking of senior executives in the IT sector with two well-known industry conferences, the IT Management Forum and the CIO Brief.

David Keane is a Senior Lecturer in Information Systems within the School of Communications and Information Management at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. His research, teaching, and consulting experience is in information systems management, business process reengineering, and defining the information needs of senior executives. He is consistently ranked as an excellent teacher and makes extensive use of his own case studies in the classroom.

Mike Wade is a Doctoral student in Information Systems at the Richard Ivey School of Business at The University of Western Ontario, Canada. Mike, in collaboration with Sid Huff and others, has recently developed an extensive series of case studies dealing with the management issues associated with Electronic Commerce in organizations, many of which were published in the recent book *Cases in Electronic Commerce*.

Sid Huff is Professor and Chair of Information Systems at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. Sid has written over 50 case studies on all aspects of Information Systems management, and has taught information systems subjects with cases for over 20 years. He is the lead author of *Cases in Electronic Commerce*, published by Irwin/McGraw-Hill in late 1999.