Association for Information Systems
AIS Electronic Library (AISeL)

ICIS 1994 Proceedings

International Conference on Information Systems (ICIS)

Evolving an Information Systems Research Strategy

Gordon Davis
University of Minnesota

Guy Gable
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Wanda Orlikowski
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Follow this and additional works at: http://aisel.aisnet.org/icis1994

PANEL 5

EVOLVING AN INFORMATION SYSTEMS
RESEARCH STRATEGY

Panel Chair: Gordon B. Davis, University of Minnesota

Panelists: Guy G. Gable, Queensland University of Technology
John A. Sharp, Canterbury Business School

Many new IS research groups have come into existence over the past several years. This is especially so in the Asia Pacific region, as reflected in the Asia Pacific Directory of Information Systems Researchers (APDISR), which in its first edition (1994) includes approximately 1,300 staff from 150 institutions in fourteen countries. New IS research groups also continue to be established throughout North America and Europe (the North American, European and Asia Pacific directories in sum reflect approximately 4,000 researchers from 800 institutions in 40 countries). The circumstances of these "new" IS groups are often quite different (e.g., younger staff, lack of research focus) from more established groups. Also, the circumstances of Asia Pacific groups may be quite different from those in North America and Europe (e.g., geographic proximity, external validity of findings, reward systems). Rather than attempt to track research directions or present a framework for research, this panel will focus on more practical issues of evolving a research strategy that maximizes the effectiveness of these new IS groups, taking account of their unique circumstances and comparative advantages.

Issues that may be more acute in "new" IS groups include:

* promoting a research culture
* identifying a group's comparative advantage
* developing a group research strategy
* achieving synergies from fit between different levels of research strategy (e.g., personal → group → department → faculty → institution → state government → national government)
* research funding
* balancing research, teaching, consulting and administration
* internal and external networking with colleagues
* leverage through higher degree students
* geographic proximity (e.g., costs of conference attendance)
* language and cultural differences
* industry relations
* attracting, developing, and keeping high-quality staff
* research methods: focused versus eclectic
* research focus: eclectic versus clusters versus "umbrella theme"

References

Alavi, M., and Carlson, P. "A Review of MIS Research and Disciplinary Development." *Journal of Management Information Systems*, Volume 8, Number 4, Spring 1992, pp. 45-62.