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# Communications of the Association for Information Systems

CAIS 

## The IS History Initiative: Looking Forward by Looking Back

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### Abstract:

After officially appointing an AIS historian and forming the AIS history task force at the beginning of 2013, the AIS supported a set of systematic efforts, named IS history initiative, to preserve and represent the IS field's history. From the perspective of the first AIS historian, I provide some background for the IS history initiative. Then I outline a detailed strategic plan and current status of its implementation. Ultimately, the IS history initiative has three goals: (1) to collect, represent, and preserve the IS field's history; (2) to interpret, write, disseminate, and review the IS field's history; and (3) to discover/identify IS genealogy, roots, sources, and facets that deserve to be examined from a historical point of view. Correspondingly, the strategic plan contains three parts. Each part has several specific tasks, many of which were already completed at the time of this writing, and several are either in progress or are planned for future efforts. This paper overviews both current efforts and guiding future efforts related to preserving and representing IS history.

**Keywords:** IS Discipline, IS Field, MIS, History, IS Research, IS Education, IS Journals, IS Conferences, IS in Different Regions, Historiography, History Methods.

**Editor's note:** The article was handled by Ping Zhang, the Department Editor for History of Information Systems

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### I. INTRODUCTION

“If you don't know where you've come from, you don't know where you are.” – James Burke

The history of any academic field plays an important role in shaping its present state and giving it its unique identity. The information systems (IS) field has a unique yet rich history of its own. It is important for all involved to grasp its past to understand its present and to project and guide its possible future.

Researchers have made solid efforts in preserving and presenting IS history prior to 2013. For example, there have been personal interviews of influential IS scholars (e.g., King & Lyytinen, 2006; Porra & Hirschheim, 2007; Porra, 2001), publications that depict or debate the IS field's intellectual history (e.g., Backhouse, Liebenau, & Land, 1991; Banker & Kauffman, 2004; Banville & Landry, 1989; Baskerville & Myers, 2002; Benbasat & Weber, 1996; Currie & Galliers, 1999; Dickson, Benbasat, & King, 1982; Hirschheim & Klein, 2012; King & Lyytinen, 2006; Lee, 2010; Lee & Lee, 2004; Mumford, 2003), efforts to work on IS history (e.g., Bryant, Black, Land, & Porra, 2013), journal special issues focusing on some aspects of the IS history (e.g., Bryant et al., 2013; Hirschheim, Saunders, & Straub, 2012; Land, Aris, & Mallor, 2003), and regional or country-specific collections of IS history (e.g., Gable, Gregor, Clarke, Ridley, & Smyth, 2008). One of the IS pioneers and former editor-in-chief of *Communications of the AIS (CAIS)*, the late Paul Gray, was a key player in IS history who championed efforts to preserve it (see <http://www.cgu.edu/pages/2057.asp> for his own contributions).

In 2012, a few members from the AIS council started looking for a historian to lead an effort to collect, preserve, interpret, write, and disseminate the IS field's history. They hoped that such an effort can maintain the IS field's legacy and heritage by beginning it now—while many pioneers in our field are still among us and related memories are still relatively fresh and can be cross validated. Such an effort should serve not only the IS field but also the larger scholarly community and fields outside IS.

In January 2013, the AIS council appointed me as the first AIS historian to lead the IS history initiative, and also to take on the role of department editor on IS history in the AIS communication committee (chaired at the time by Richard Baskerville). Although we use the title AIS historian, the scope of this position's responsibilities is the entire IS field that has a history of more than 50 years, not just AIS as an association (which was formed in 1994). A task force on IS history initiative was subsequently formed with the following members: Richard Baskerville from George State University, Rudy Hirschheim from Louisiana State University, Frank Land from London School of Economics and Political Science, Andrew Schwarz from Louisiana State University, and Doug Vogel from Harbin Institute of Technology in China. The following is the mission statement of the task force that was presented in a proposal to the council:

*The AIS History Task Force for the IS Discipline fosters collection, preservation, interpretation, writing, and dissemination of the historical information in and about the IS field. To this end, the task force provides guidance within AIS and organizes activities independently and in collaboration with other AIS committees and groups. It advises AIS council on matters of the legacy and heritage of the IS field.*

The IS history initiative has three goals: (1) to collect, represent, and preserve the IS field's history, (2) to interpret, write, disseminate, and review the IS field's history, and (3) to discover/identify IS genealogy, roots, sources, and facets that deserve to be examined from a historical point of view.

This paper overviews the IS History initiative during my tenure as the AIS historian from January 2013 to June 2015. The paper lays out a strategic plan, various tasks and the rationales behind them, and some current or foreseeable outcomes. This paper does **not** overview IS history itself; indeed, no one paper can capture the depth or breadth of the entire IS field's history. Moreover, this paper does **not** provide any in-depth analysis or recount any aspect of the IS field's history. Such analyses and accounts, either by the AIS historian or by other scholars, will be written in separate papers. Ideally, any analyses and accounts can be better understood and appreciated in the overall context that this paper provides. For this reason, this paper introduces and previews the selected papers that appear in this special issue, the first published in *CAIS's* IS history section. Since January 2013, many people have been invited to contribute to the IS history initiative in various capacities, which I highlight in this paper.

The rest of the paper is organized as the following. In Section 2, I provide two types of contexts that are relevant and important for the IS history initiative: one is about the IS field in my eye as the AIS historian, and the other about my personal background that helped form my views and approaches to IS history. In Section 3, I overview the IS history initiative from a higher level and then focus on several aspects related to the first two goals. In Section 4, I describe specific facets of the IS history initiative that are related to the third goal, and discuss related efforts, tasks, existing outcomes, and expected outcomes. In Section 5, I call for future efforts and contributions from interested people in the IS field and beyond. Because this is a non-traditional academic paper, I enjoy the privilege of fewer restrictions and write in a more personal style.

## II. CONTEXTS

In this paper, I contextualize the IS history initiative by considering: 1) the IS field itself, particularly in my eye, and 2) my personal background. These points are relevant because, as I see it, history is in the eye of the beholder. After all, the initiative is about the IS field's history, and my view of this field and my personal experience in it will affect efforts I lead in the initiative. As I mention in Section 1, this paper does not comprehensively recount the IS field's history (nor my own). Rather, I briefly overview each to help readers to understand the what, why, and how aspects of the IS history initiative.

### The IS Field in My Eye

Different scholars may have different views on what constitutes the IS field's dawn or beginning. For example, Rick Watson, in his panel speech at the AMCIS 2013 panel on the IS field's timeline (Zhang, Benbasat, McLean, Watson, & Zmud, 2013), stated, based on his research (Watson, Lind, & Haraldson, 2012; Watson, 2013, 2014), that information systems have existed for millions of years, that people have been building them for a long time, and that the information systems field started only after the computers were created. Others may consider that the IS field started when computers were first used to solve problems in businesses and organizations (e.g., Gorry & Morton, 1971; Grochla & Szyperski, 1975; Livari, 2015; Land, 2015b; Langefors, 1973; Simmons, 1962). Moreover, different regions of the world have different starting points and different development for the IS field in those regions.

A scientific field's formation is usually signaled by several disciplinary indicators (Zhang & Benjamin, 2007; Zhang & Li, 2005; Zhang, Liew, & Hassman, 2013): conference meetings that provide a forum for similarly minded scholars to meet and discuss shared intellectual interests, educational curricula and degree programs that indicate the need for graduates in the field by the public at large, research journals that are long-term repositories of scientific knowledge, and identified phenomena as intellectual interests. From this view, one could posit that the IS field began to emerge as an independent field of study in the 60s to the 70s. Because people first applied computers to business processes in the early 50s, many discussions and idea exchanges were mainly confined to consultants and practitioners (e.g., Anonymous, 1957; Simmons, 1962), and the IS field (or area at the time) was regarded as a part of the information processing and computer studies domains.

Subsequently, some academic activity started at a small scale. It is interesting to note the wide international reach of these early efforts: they ranged from the US, Scandinavia, France, Germany, the UK, Italy, the Netherlands, and elsewhere (Willcocks & Lee, 2008). For example, there was a McKinsey co-sponsored seminar held in February 1959 at the University of Chicago's Graduate School of Business that produced a proceedings (Shultz & Whisler, 1960). The issue of evaluating information systems was examined as early as 1961 at a conference chaired by a Swiss researcher Frieling (1961). In the UK, Patrick Lost received his PhD from the London School of Economics with his thesis *Computer and Management Structures*. In Germany, Erwin Groschla founded the Institute for the study of Information Systems, BIFOA, at the University of Cologne in 1963 (see [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Betriebswirtschaftliches\\_Institut\\_f%C3%BCr\\_Organisation\\_und\\_Automation](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Betriebswirtschaftliches_Institut_f%C3%BCr_Organisation_und_Automation)). In Sweden, Langefors developed his theory of information systems (Langefors, 1973). The International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP) Technical Committee 8 (TC-8) on information systems was established in 1976 in Europe. The first U.S. conference designated for the IS field, named the Conference in Information Systems (CIS) at the time and later changed to the International Conference on Information Systems (ICIS), was planned in the late 70s and held in 1980 after the founding fathers of this conference, when attending other conferences in management, operations research, computer science, and so on, realized the common interests among themselves and a sufficient critical mass for having their own conference. The Harvard Business School (HBS) began teaching MIS courses in the spring of 1962 and, by the end of the 60s, had over 400 students (McFarlan, personal communication, 2015). The IS educational programs can be traced back to at least 1963 (Sprowls, 1963) if not earlier. One of the first IS texts and case books based on field-based cases was published in 1966 (Deardon & McFarlan, 1966). After scholars had published in many journals in other fields in the 60s and 70s, the first academic journal designated solely to IS, the *MIS Quarterly*, was established in 1977.

Relevant to the intellectual interests, researchers widely acknowledge that the IS field is not computer science, not management, not management science, not organizational behavior, and not operations research, but something that bridges several fields together. The intellectual phenomena in the IS field, at least in its early days, had something to do with designing or applying computer technologies to address or solve problems in businesses and organizations, and with investigating any consequences of such design and application. For example, the first U.K. computer for business data processing rolled out its earliest application in November 1951 at the headquarters of the catering and food manufacturer J. Lyons (Simmons, 1962), and the first three American computers for business data processing were installed in the autumn of 1954, one at the General Electric Company at Louisville, Kentucky, and two at insurance companies on the East Coast (Gregory, 1959). One of the earliest cases on the complex issues of change management triggered by new technology was published in 1961 by Glenn D. Overman and was later included in the Dearden and McFarlan 1966 case book (Overman, 1966). Thus, different from computer science and engineering, the IS field is not purely about technology. Nor is it purely about management or operations. Yet, the intellectual interests in the IS field are driven or significantly affected by state of art of information and computer technology development, and by organizations using information and computer technologies. Thus, from this point of view, the IS field is more an applied field than pure science, and has inherited ties to both information and computer technology development and real world businesses and organizations. In addition, the field's historical development meant that it has developed close ties with business schools, which we see still today.

From an academic perspective, the IS field is young because it only existed for about 50-60 years compared to other fields such as physics, chemistry, mathematics, psychology, and so on, some of which have existed for centuries. The advantage of being a young field is that many of the founders and early influential figures are still among us to help depict and understand the field's history. This situation, however, is changing for the worse with the passing of several high profile founders in recent years, who took their valuable historical perspectives with them. This puts pressure on the IS history effort to act as quickly as possible to collect valuable historical memories.

Although the IS field is young and although it emerged from a larger field or a network of other fields, researchers widely agree that it has matured (e.g., Córdoba, Pilkington, & Bernroider, 2012; Grover, 2012; Xu, Chau, & Tan, 2014) such that it makes sense and is feasible to start a systematic effort to show its legacy, heritage, and holistic nature. Understandably, it will take more effort and many more people to collectively paint a holistic picture of the IS field over many years, the main purpose of the IS history initiative is to start such efforts by providing some guidance and direction.

## A Personal Background

This would be the proper place to proclaim that I was not academically or professionally trained as a historian. Rather, my research interests in the intellectual development of scientific fields and some of my publications on such topics landed me the opportunity to be identified and appointed as the first AIS historian. That being said, I do have some personal involvement with some aspects of the history in the IS field. In this section, I recount three aspects of my career that have affected my approaches and efforts in the IS history initiative. The first is my involvement in developing the first custom-made management information system in China in the 80s. The second is my efforts to raise awareness of human-factors research in the IS field. The third is my interest in the intellectual development of information-related fields such as information systems, human-computer interaction, and library and information science.

### The First MIS Made in China in the 80s

It was the summer of 1984. I was vacationing in my hometown in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia right after graduating with a BSc degree in computer science (CS). I was just about to start my Master's program in the same department at Peking University (PKU), in Beijing, China. A telegram came: I was summoned to immediately return to PKU in order to go to Nanjing (a major city about 23 hours from Beijing by train at the time) to be part of a project. I later learned that this would be the first management information system ever developed in China. At the time, the Chinese Government wanted to explore the possibility of applying computer technology to solve business and managerial problems. There were no such commercial systems available at all. The government sponsored the project: a model organization, Nanjing Automobile Manufacture (the third largest automobile manufacturer in China), was chosen to be the client, and a group of professors and graduate students from the CS department at PKU were selected as the development team. The system had to be specifically developed for this organization and was intended to be a comprehensive enterprise system that covered most parts of the organization's management and operations. Interestingly, few professors knew what was involved and how to develop such an application. Furthermore, none of the development team members had any knowledge or experience about management and organizations, or about their strategies, operations, or other related aspects. One professor just finished a one-year visiting position in a university in the US and brought home a little book with a blue color cover and white color text titled *Software*

*Engineering.* This book became our “recipe” for the project. It used the basic waterfall model as its system development methodology, but thinly covered other related issues or aspects. In retrospect, the book was not effective in guiding our practice and there were many situations where we had no idea what to do. It is understandable now because the entire field was still developing in the mid-80s. Also at that time, the platform of computing had just shifted from mainframe computers to minicomputers (before microcomputers). The concept of a computer was very abstract to the public and few had ever seen a computer in their lives. Many people thought computers were magical machines that could make the unthinkable happen. In terms of the system environment, the corresponding operating system, database management system, and other system software were unstable, unreliable, and still being tested. On top of these problems, the Chinese language interface, which was a must once the system was put in use, was still in the development and testing stage.

The development team started with one supervisor (department chair), two senior professors, and four graduate students (one incoming second year, and three incoming for the first year, including myself). The two senior professors and the four students spent days in Nanjing for the feasibility study and eventually developed higher-level requirements and the system’s scope. A contract was signed after that and then the project was in full swing. Communication with the client was extremely difficult for several reasons. First of all, the development team was still trying to understand how to do things and what were the involved issues and challenges in developing an MIS. Moreover, we had little knowledge about the application domain; thus, we did not always know clearly what to ask or how to discuss issues. Second, the client had little firsthand experience with computers, let alone a possible application system that might help them; thus, they did not know what to expect. Third, the long distance caused by the geographical locations of the two parties made it impossible to conduct frequent face-to-face communication. And last, the overall communication infrastructure in China was poor at the time. The only synchronized communication was long-distance phone calls, which were extremely expensive and inconvenient (one needed to go to a central post office to wait for their turn to make a call while hoping the recipient happened to be by the phone at the other end). Other possible media for communications were telegrams (these could be delivered in hours but were charged by the number of characters; thus, people tended to make them very short and uninformative) and regular letters (these would take one week to ten days to reach the recipient if they ever made it at all).

Nevertheless, we strictly followed the waterfall model and made reasonable progress. On the development team, one original member (the second year graduate student) dropped out but several more people were added. By the summer of 1985, a total of 18 people were on the team. The three original professors visited the client site periodically, and the 15 students (see two photos in Appendix A) resided in Nanjing for varying periods ranging from one to three months during the summer while working on designing and coding the system. Among these 15 students were two third-year graduate students, five first-year graduate students (including myself), five incoming graduate students, and three undergraduate students. A small part of the system was running during the summer of 1985 and, as such, users were able to have some firsthand experience of what a computer program could do, what a user interface would be like, how to enter raw data in Chinese, and what a report would look like. At this time, a lot of rethinking and reanalysis took place. Needless to say, along with the excitement came a lot of frustration and disappointment from both sides. The sponsor’s encouragement and deep commitment from the organization’s leadership helped tremendously to move the project forward. During the following 10 months (the second year of the project), six students (including myself) lived in Nanjing full time to work on the system on a daily basis. During the first half of the next year (the third year), only two people stayed in Nanjing working full time on the project: myself and a junior faculty member who joined the project during the summer 1985 as a graduate student.

As a side note, while working on the project along with five other graduate students in the same year, I finished my master’s degree by spending one year and a half on campus and the other one year and a half through distance learning (at the time, a master’s degree took three years to finish). My thesis topic was based on the Nanjing project. These years were filled with excitement, frustration, struggles, fun, more frustration, more struggles, a sense of fulfillment, and most importantly to me, deep thinking, which led to my first set of academic publications (the first four were in Chinese and the last in English) (Tang, Fang, & Zhang, 1985, 1987; Yang, Tang, & Zhang, 1988, 1989; Zhang, 1989). Among all the challenges and frustration we faced, which seem typical to all the reported challenges and issues in the IS literature, what was most eye-opening to me was the realization that computer systems must be designed with their potential users in mind: our end users struggled to understand and use the system. Training alone seemed to offer very limited solutions and did not solve the real underlying problems. This made me realize that, regardless of how advanced computer technologies could be, the user interface—the layer between system and user that reflects designers’ understanding of users’ physical and cognitive abilities—is the bottle neck for computer technologies’ success. Designers need to put a lot of thought into designing the system so that it not only has the required functionalities (something our team tried extremely hard to achieve during the development process), but also sufficient quality to make it usable. Otherwise, it’s all a waste.

The Nanjing system eventually was completed, released, celebrated, and put to real use in the organization by summer 1987. All development team members left the project except myself. In Fall 1987, I became a junior faculty member in the CS department at PKU. Naturally, I became the consultant for supervising the system's execution, helping the client train the staff for managerial issues and system use, and maintaining the system. During the initial use period, small or big problems with the system or its use would find their way to me. Many times I had to fly to Nanjing (a big improvement considering we had to take the train to go to Nanjing in the early days of the project) to fix a problem that took only minutes. However, there were many other times a problem would be severe enough that I would not be able to address it at all. Eventually, I had to withdraw from maintaining the system in order to focus on my primary faculty duties at PKU. And the system stopped working shortly after that.

Many lessons and experiences learned from this first project were extremely beneficial for the second and third projects in which I was involved. The second project was for Beijing Television Factory and the third was for Beijing Insurance Company, both of which were located in Beijing, less than a one-hour bicycle ride away. Both projects involved several employees from the clients from the beginning of the development. Even though these employees were not trained in computer science, they were college graduates and were eager and able to learn along the way. Thus, they were able to carry on the systems once the development team completed the projects. Among many new experiences gained and new observations made, I became greatly interested in MIS and human-factor issues of developing and using information systems.

#### Pushing HCI Research in IS by Co-founding SIGHCI and AIS THCI

Completing a PhD in the IS field (it was listed as MIS in the Peterson's Guide in late 80s when I was searching for study programs in the US) became my next desirable step in my career development. I had been confronted with a lot of questions during my involvement in those three MIS projects and hoped that an in-depth study in the IS field would allow me to find some answers. In December 1989, I went to the US to start my PhD education and, in 1995, I received my PhD degree in IS from the Graduate School of Business in The University of Texas at Austin. In my PhD dissertation entitled *Visualization for Decision Making Support*, I attempted to address human-factor issues that reflected my observations and thoughts from those early projects in China. During the dissertation research, I was fascinated by a field called human-computer interaction (HCI). I found many interesting perspectives and ideas that could be used to address some of my concerns, yet I also developed more questions and observations about the HCI field. With my research interests rooted in the information systems for real-world organizations (my dissertation was targeted toward an IBM assembly line in Austin), I found the traditional HCI focus to be less satisfying. I believed that there were unique considerations in the IS field in addressing human-factor issues that were not well realized by the traditional HCI folks. Yet, few scholars had articulated these unique considerations up to the mid-90s. I considered such differences to be in some ways similar to those differences between computer science and IS: one is more concerned with developing an efficient program/system to meet some given requirements, while the other is more concerned with defining and justifying the requirements. The level of abstraction, the level of analysis, and the role of context are significantly different between traditional HCI research and the type of HCI research in the IS field.

Something happened next that played an important role in my career move. During a campus job interview in 1995 when I was graduating with my PhD, a senior scholar said after my research presentation that my general research area was outside the IS field's main stream. After reading more literature and thinking more about this assertion, I formulated a firm belief that this should not be the case. Organizational issues, managerial issues, and economic issues are important, but so are the issues concerning end users and other related people (e.g., customers, system developers, etc.). After all, organizations are made of people, and people make things happen or not. I felt that more scholars should recognize the bottle neck issue I identified early in those Chinese projects. I further believed that the broader issues concerning human interaction with technology during the entire technology life-cycle (both development and use stages) should be addressed as an important research area in the IS field and, thus, that this type of research should be in IS's main stream.

In 2001, the year I received tenure, AIS was calling for proposals for special interest groups (SIG). With support from a good number of senior scholars, Fiona Nah (in University of Nebraska Lincoln at the time) and I formed the AIS special interest group on HCI. It is a forum for scholars of similar minds and interests to exchange ideas and support each other. SIGHCI became a vehicle to promote IS-oriented HCI research (Zhang et al., 2002) and bridge it to other related fields and associations such as ACM SIG on computer-human interaction (CHI), the human factors and ergonomics society (HFES), and others (Galletta, Zhang, & Nah, 2005; Zhang, 2004, 2006). During the first three years while I was the founding chair, the SIG's vision, strategies, and operations were established by focusing on intellectual, organizational, and educational aspects (Zhang, Li, Scialdone, & Carey, 2009). Intellectual aspects included addressing definitions, boundaries, and phenomena of the intellectual core of the sub-field in academic publications and conference tracks, mini-tracks, sessions in all major IS conferences, and beyond. Best papers from these conferences were fast tracked to journals as special issues (Nah, Zhang, & McCoy, 2005; Nah, Zhang,

McCoy, & Yi, 2006; Zhang & Dillon, 2003; Zhang, Nah, & Preece, 2004; Zhang, Nah, & Benbasat, 2005), a practice that inspired what several IS conferences and other SIGs do now. Organizational aspects included an advisory board and officer positions, bylaws, and policies and practice to sustain the community and develop the leadership. Additional activities included planning and monitoring budgets, fund raising, outreaching, promoting, collaborating with other associations (such as ACM SIGCHI, HCI International, Uxnet), and working on other specific projects to generate interest from potential participants in and outside the IS field. Educational aspects included pushing HCI materials into the model curricula in IS (Carey et al., 2004; Gorgone, Gray, Stohr, Valacich, & Wigand, 2006) and co-writing the first textbook on the subject (Te'eni, Carey, & Zhang, 2007).

To build on the momentum and stop “begging” journal editors for special issues, in 2008, I surveyed the extant HCI scholarly communities to test the feasibility of a new journal. Then I developed a proposal to outline its goals, themes, editorial boards, potential authorship and readership, a business model with budgeting and sustainability, expected outcomes, and a five-year plan. *AIS Transactions on Human-Computer Interaction* (THCI) (Galletta & Zhang, 2009), which I co-edited with Dennis Galletta, became the first transactions journal in AIS. *THCI* started publishing in 2009 and has provided a stream of high-quality, high-impact publications. By June 2013 when I finished my term as EIC, *THCI* had published 44 research papers and 7 editorials that involved authors from 19 countries on four continents. In 2013, one of the five top outstanding publications in the entire IS field was from *THCI*. SIGHCI, *THCI*'s sponsor, is now the most active and largest SIG in AIS. It is financially sound with a large surplus, and is regarded as a model SIG for others to follow. IS/HCI research is now recognized a central component of the IS field.

#### My Interest in the Intellectual Development of Information Related Fields

Besides the efforts and the thinking processes related to the HCI research in the IS field, another important contributing factor to my increased interest in understanding the intellectual development of academic fields is that I have been a faculty member in an information school (iSchool) since 1995. Some questions I have constantly faced include: what is the difference between ACM CHI and IS/HCI research? What is the difference between the IS field and the information science field? What is the difference between an information school, a business school, and a library school? What does the term “information system” mean in these different fields? In fact, almost 20 years ago during my first faculty meeting at Syracuse University, every faculty member reported what they had been doing and it was shocking to realize that, although my PhD degree is in information systems, my colleagues held drastically different meanings for the term. From that moment, I realized that there are worlds outside my own world and that I should never take for granted the assumptions, meanings, or scopes of any concept or understanding.

With many years of reading the literature and thinking and dialoguing with colleagues, I believe that, although there are different fields that are all focused on some aspects of information, there are tremendous overlaps and similarities among these fields. My colleague Bob Benjamin in the iSchool at Syracuse University and I explored some similarities and differences in several information-related fields and developed a conceptual model, named the information model or I-model, to understand these fields better and to provide guidance on future research and education (Zhang & Benjamin, 2007). With the formation and fast movement of the information schools (Grudin & Olson, 2009; King, 2006) and the increased interest in information schools from various constituents (Bruce, Richardson, & Eisenberg, 2006; Liddy, 2012; Thomas, Von Dran, & Sawyer, 2006), many individuals in the information schools now recognize that not all information schools are the same. To demonstrate again the similarities and differences of the intellectual characteristics (tenure track faculty's intellectual heritages based on their doctoral training, and intellectual substances based on journal publications during 2008-2010) among the information schools, I worked with two doctoral students to use the I-model to analyze the empirical evidence from the five original information schools (Zhang et al., 2013). The findings of this study have implications for the identity of the information schools and the information field, the field's development, forming new information schools and evolving existing schools, faculty career development, and collaboration in the information field. The findings can also provide food for thought when thinking about where an IS program might better be in a university setting (Avison & Ein-Dor, 2007) or what the potential expansions of the intellectual interests of the IS field in identifying either allies or competitors could be. For example, if the primary context (or level of analysis) of IS studies is beyond organizations, what might be other contexts (or levels of analysis) and who have been studying or publishing and, thus, influencing those contexts?

To summarize, my view of the IS and several other related fields and my personal experience with developing management information systems for real organizations in China have influenced my approaches to lead the IS history initiative.



### III. OVERVIEW OF THE IS HISTORY INITIATIVE

In this section and in Section 4, I outline various efforts and activities during my term of service as the AIS historian. Besides providing a high-level picture, this section depicts some of the actionable efforts, and Section 4 emphasizes the efforts' thematic coverage of IS history. Some of the efforts and activities have achieved concrete results, and some are in progress with anticipated outcomes or are to be conducted in the future.

#### Goals, Guiding Principles, and Priorities

Since there was no systematic effort prior to 2013 to preserve IS history regarding the entire field, it only made sense to start a strategic plan with high-level goals, guiding principles, priorities, and specific tasks and activities.

Again, the IS history initiative has the following three goals:

- (1) to collect, represent, and preserve the IS field's history
- (2) to interpret, write, disseminate, and review the IS field's history, and
- (3) to discover/identify IS genealogy, roots, sources and facets that deserve to be examined from a historical point of view.

As I mention earlier, I believe that history is in the eye of the beholder. The more broadly we can engage the community of the IS field, the better we can represent IS history. Thus, it is necessary to engage as much as possible the entire IS community in the efforts related to preserving IS history. Related to this belief, there are several guiding principles for the IS history initiatives:

- Multiple perspectives from multiple contributors on the same historical matters
- Being inclusive with a global view of the IS field, and
- Being open-minded and welcoming various views and suggestions on how to preserve IS history.

One of the initiative's several priorities is to capture and/or create opportunities to secure historical sources or resources that may be under time pressure. The other priority is to focus on several high-profile aspects with key elements to test out and demonstrate possible efforts and methods and, thus, provide ideas for additional aspects and extensions.

#### A Strategic Plan

The strategic plan has two parts: the first part is the action-oriented part (corresponding to the first two goals above), and the second part is the thematic part (corresponding to the third goal). The action-oriented part has two aspects: (1) collect, represent, and preserve, and (2) interpret, write, and disseminate. In each aspect, there are additional facets with mid-term and short-term objectives and tasks. Table 1 outlines the action-oriented part. The last column shows short-term tasks that were either completed by the time of this writing, or are in progress (marked with an \*), or are to be done in the future (\*\*). Serving as an action map for the first two years and a half of the IS history initiative, the strategic plan in Table 1 can be revised and expanded in the future. For example, one can easily add more mid-term and short-term objectives and tasks to the plan as the IS history effort continues under the leadership of future AIS historians.

Section 4 describes the thematic coverage of the strategic plan (corresponding to the third goal and outlined in Table 2).

One of the challenges for beginning a systematic effort is to develop the necessary infrastructures. There are several such infrastructures that are worth special mention: legal and procedural, technological and dissemination, and community engagement. I describe these infrastructures in the following subsections, and explain other activities in Section 4 when I introduce these infrastructures' thematic aspects.



**Table 1: Action-Oriented Part of the Strategic Plan for the IS History Initiative**

Ultimate goal	Mid-term objective	Sample short-term task
<b>A. Collect, represent, and preserve</b>	A1. Preparing legal and procedure infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donation guidelines and procedures</li> <li>• Solicitation letter</li> <li>• Deed of gift</li> <li>• IRB approval</li> <li>• Identification of libraries and museums that may collect documentary and physical artifacts in the IS field</li> </ul>
	A2. Preparing technological infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IS history website</li> <li>• AIS e-lib section</li> <li>• Mendeley collection</li> <li>• Facebook page(s)</li> <li>• A guideline for where to archive what in what way</li> <li>• (**) An IT infrastructure for collecting social history (stories told by regular people)</li> </ul>
	A3. Archiving events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PACIS 20-year history video at the 20th anniversary meeting</li> <li>• AMCIS 2013 IS history panel</li> <li>• Google video of LEO 60th anniversary celebration</li> <li>• ICIS 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration video at ICIS 2014 meeting</li> </ul>
	A4. Archiving journals and conferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A detailed list of ICIS meetings since 1980</li> <li>• A detailed list of AMCIS meetings since 1995</li> <li>• <i>MISQ</i> journal history</li> <li>• <i>JMIS</i> journal history</li> <li>• <i>THCI</i> journal history</li> </ul>
	A5. Archiving documents and artifacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some SIM annual meeting reports</li> <li>• Building, tagging/indexing, verifying, and updating Mendeley collection</li> </ul>
	A6. Archiving memories, oral histories, pioneers' life stories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing interview protocols (procedures, questions, logistics, media use, etc.) about things or career</li> <li>• Developing interview release form</li> <li>• Conducting, editing, and archiving interviews</li> </ul>
<b>B. Interpret, write, disseminate, and review</b>	B1. Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ECIS 2013 panel on IS history</li> <li>• PACIS 2013 panel on IS history</li> <li>• AMCIS 2013 panel on IS history</li> <li>• ICIS 2013 forum on IS history</li> <li>• ACIS 2013 panel on IS history</li> <li>• ECIS 2014 panel on IS history</li> <li>• AMCIS 2014 panel on IS history</li> <li>• AMCIS2014 keynote section on IS history</li> </ul>
	B2. Writing and dissemination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACIS 2013 Track on IS history</li> <li>• AMCIS 2014 Track on IS history</li> <li>• <i>CAIS</i> special section and special issues on IS history</li> <li>• (*) More IS journals to publish history related writings</li> </ul>

## Legal and Procedural Infrastructure (A1)

Collecting historical data and artifacts may involve intellectual property issues or human right issues. In addition, there should be some standard procedures to follow when such data or artifacts are being collected.

During the first several months of the IS history initiatives, several legal and procedure documents were developed with feedback from an intellectual property lawyer and special collection experts (these documents are downloadable from the IS history website:

1. The **solicitation letter**: to be used to invite donors to donate potentially valuable historical artifacts.
2. The **donation guidelines and procedures**: to outline the general terms, conditions, and procedures for donations.
3. The **deed of gift: to be** issued and signed by both an AIS representative and the donor once a donated artifact is appraised for its historical value. It functions as both a receipt and a contract for intellectual property and/or copyright related terms and conditions.

Another important document is the approval from Institutional Review Board (IRB) for conducting interviews or surveys that involve people. IRB approval was obtained at Syracuse University.

## Technological Infrastructure (A2)

One distinction of the IS history initiatives is to preserve and represent IS history with technological support and in the form of, where possible, digital representations. To ensure broad accessibility and longevity, digital representations of IS history will be the hallmark of our efforts and physical copies of historical artifacts will be minimized or eliminated where possible.

Several technological platforms were developed during the early stage of the initiative: an AIS-hosted website to serve as an information hub, an AIS e-library section to host IS history-related publications, a Mendeley group to collect published references related to IS history, and a Facebook page to share and collect related materials. A guideline for how these platforms work together was also developed for future historians and assistants to use.

### IS History Website—Information Hub

As part of the AIS website, the IS history website (<http://history.aisnet.org>) hosts all the information related to the IS history initiative. It is an information hub/portal that provides both relevant content and links to various relevant and important sources outside it. Although the website can be reorganized or redesigned frequently, its main purpose is to allow visitors to find all related information about IS history. For example, one can find out the what, who, and how-to-contact information about the initiative. All major events and activities organized or related to the initiative are listed with text descriptions and, where available, media files such as photos and videos. The IS field timelines, which is constantly updated, should gain the attention of every interested visitor. Links to historical events and websites in related fields or societies are also provided where one can find collections of historical artifacts and oral histories.

One important part of IS history is the various repositories. The IS history website provides a structure to gradually collect and update such important repositories. If a specific repository is hosted outside the IS history website (such as the AIS e-library and the Mendeley group; see below), a link is provided. If there is no such designated place, then the repository is built inside the IS history website. For example, the following collections represent some specific areas at the time of this writing. I expect that this list will be expanded or revised as the efforts in preserving IS history continue.

- AIS History: AIS is the official association for the IS field. Any writings about the AIS and its related history would be collected here. For example, there is a pointer to Bill King and Dennis Galletta's paper (King & Galletta, 2010) on establishing AIS. A PDF version of the AIS 20-year legacy booklet is available for download at the website.
- IS conferences history: the history of each of the many IS conferences is provided here. For example, for the first IS conference, ICIS, one can find a brief description, a detailed list of all the meetings with years, locations, themes, organizing committees, and special events, and a link to the photos from its planning meeting, and the first and subsequent meetings.
- IS journals history: similar to the IS conferences, this is a place for the historical information for each of the many IS journals. For example, for *Management Information Systems Quarterly (MISQ)*, the first IS journal,



one can find links to its official website and its Wikipedia page. Additional historical related information about *MISQ*, can be added to this space.

- IS education history: historical information about educational programs goes here.
- IS oral history: list and link to the publications of all the interviews conducted by the historian or others in an effort to preserve IS history.
- SMIS/SIM history: this place collects some reports from past SMIS/SIM meetings or related events.
- Key IS contributors: there are three categories at the moment: AIS LEO award recipients, AIS fellows, and AIS presidents (link to AIS presidential gallery). Additional information can be collected and presented beyond what is shown on the AIS award website for AIS LEO award recipients and AIS fellows. For example, for each LEO award recipient, wherever possible and available, the repository shows the individual's personal website, Wikipedia entry, interviews, news coverage, and tributes by others.
- Tributes to pioneer scholars: this place collects either published tributes or unpublished tributes. For the published ones, there is a link to Mendeley collection. For the unpublished ones, they are included in the website. For example, one can find Bill King's tribute to Jack Rockart and Dennis Galletta's tribute to Gerry DeSanctis.
- Tributes to IS historical events: one example of the collection is pointers to events that celebrated LEO's 60th anniversary.

#### [AIS E-Library Section for IS History Collection—Publishing Platform](#)

The AIS e-library holds electronic journals and IS conference proceedings that AIS publishes. Certain outcomes from IS history efforts need to become official publications to be archived, disseminated, and distributed. These publications may not share some of the attributes of other journals or conference proceedings and may be in non-text formats such as audio, video, photos, and so on. For example, the personal interviews should be referable publications, so are media files associated with some history-related events. These are not peer reviewed but are carefully guarded by the historian as the gatekeeper. The AIS e-library's IS history section was created to accommodate such needs. It contains three categories at the time of this writing:

- Artifacts: this includes digital representations of important historical artifacts. These artifacts could be in photos, videos, or other digital forms.
- Events: this is a collection of media files associated with history-related events. For example, one can find a video about the 20 years of PACIS's history, aired at the 20th anniversary meeting in 2013 in Jeju Island, South Korea, and a video of the 35 years of ICIS' history, aired at the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary meeting in 2014 in Auckland, New Zealand. Another video clip shows the 2013 IS history panel at AMCIS.
- Interviews: the oral history of the IS field in the form of either videos or audios.

#### [Mendeley—Online Collection of Published Work Related to IS History](#)

Mendeley was founded in 2007 by three German PhD students, is based in London, and was purchased by Elsevier Publishing company in 2013. It is a desktop and Web program for managing and sharing research papers. It is both reference management software (similar to EndNote or RefWork) and social network software for academic research (similar to Wikipedia where any registered member can contribute by providing basic citation data so that it can be stored in Mendeley's servers). Registration is free and people can form private or public groups to share documents. Once a document is entered in the Mendeley collection, one can use or share it without entering the citation data again. This allows Mendeley to show readership statistics of any document. For example, it can show that a particular document has how many readers in what academic fields, in what academic status, and/or from what countries. One drawback of its social nature is that there can be inaccurate citation data that is hard to correct.

The IS history public group at Mendeley collects any published work (papers, books, book chapters, conference proceedings papers, etc.) on or about any aspect of the IS field's history. Anyone registered is welcome to browse and contribute to the collection. At the time of this writing, the Mendeley group has collected more than 300 references. It uses tags to group documents meaningfully, which can be expanded or revised as needed. Such tags include those:

About various facets of IS history:

- About IS pioneers
- IS community
- IS development methods
- IS education
- IS intellectual core
- IS journals
- IS theories
- IS oral history
- Regional
- Research methods
- Review of sub-areas
- Special issues

About histories of events or products that played an important role in the IS field:

- Alvey (The Alvey Programme was a British Government-sponsored research program in information technology that ran from 1983 to 1987)
- LEO (Lyons Electronic Office I, the first computer used for commercial applications starting in 1951)
- IS industry & practice

About history in other related fields or associations that may shed lights in studying IS history:

- History of computing
- History of information
- History of technology

About methods or approaches on studying history:

- History methods

#### Facebook—Social Media to Share and Collect Information Related to IS History

One Facebook page has been set up for sharing photos of ICIS meetings. Thanks to Ken Kendall for taking the historically important photos back in 1980, the Facebook page contains photos from the ICIS planning meeting in UCLA and the first ICIS meeting in Philadelphia. It also contains photos from the most recent ICIS meeting in Auckland, New Zealand. The Facebook page has received many “likes” from people all over the world. Additional pages can be set up for various purposes related to the IS history and everyone with a Facebook account can contribute.

### Community Awareness and Engagement (B1)

A set of events were planned and conducted to raise the general awareness, interest, and contributions of anyone inclined. As Table 1 shows, all major IS conferences in 2013 and 2014, such as ICIS, AMCIS, PACIS, ECIS, had public events (panels and special gatherings) in which multiple influential scholars contributed (see Section 4 for the thematic coverage of these events). Any interested person could attend these events physically and voice their ideas either in the room, or via special questionnaires designed for these events, and follow up with the historian for additional ideas or suggestions. Through online distribution lists such as AISWORLD listserv, subscribed members received notifications of these events. In addition, the AIS office frequently sent members a newly featured communication called *Throwback Thursday* that highlighted some of the historical facts or history related efforts.

### Dissemination Infrastructure (B2)

#### Conference Tracks—Presentations and Proceedings

Organizing IS history tracks at major IS conferences is an effective way to draw scholars’ attention, to give them opportunities to present their writing, and to have their writing in the conference proceedings, which are archived and accessible to other interested scholars. So far, both the Australia Conference on Information Systems (ACIS) in 2013 and AMCIS in 2014 had a conference track on IS history. More are encouraged for future IS conferences.

#### CAIS Special Section on IS History—A Journal to Welcome Papers on IS History

In addition to the technological infrastructures mentioned above, it is important to make sure that IS history papers are welcome when they are ready. There can be special issues on IS history, just like those in other journals in the past and this current one in *CAIS*. Yet, with more scholars interested in writing IS history, there can be papers that do not fit any special issues’ themes or timetables, and they should not have to justify to a regular IS journal why

they should be published as IS history papers. One suitable outlet for IS history papers would be AIS's communications journal, *CAIS*. The current EIC, Matti Rossi, provided strong support for the IS history initiative and agreed to form the IS history section inside *CAIS* that welcomes any submissions on IS history at any time. Additional efforts were put in place on getting more IS journals interested in publishing IS history-related writings.

#### IV. THEMATIC COVERAGE OF THE IS HISTORY INITIATIVE

In Section 3, I discuss the actions of the IS history initiative. Behind those actions are attempts to cover several thematic areas. In this section, I outline these thematic areas in Table 2 and provide detailed recounts for many of them. Some of these attempts have achieved results or outcomes, and some are in progress (noted with \*) or for future efforts (\*\*). I organize the thematic coverage by perspectives, which are determined partially by the disciplinary indicators described earlier and a few other thoughts. Each perspective may have several aspects and each aspect may have several sample collections/tasks. For the sample collections/tasks that are completed by the time of this writing, I also provide the outlets in case readers want to follow up with them. The outlet "website" means the collection can be found in the IS history website (<http://history.aisnet.org>). For panels, their descriptions can be found either in the conference proceedings or from the website under "events & activities". The website also contains the PowerPoint files from some panels. The other papers included in this special issue are discussed as sample collections/tasks.

**Table 2: Thematic Coverage Part of the Strategic Plan for the IS History Initiative**

Perspective	Sample aspect	Sample collection/task and outlet
People	Influential figures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 Pioneers in the IS field: their careers and views (interviews as oral history published in AIS e-lib)</li> <li>12 EICs from the first two IS journals (<i>MISQ</i> &amp; <i>JMIS</i>): their views and experiences (interviews as oral history published in AIS e-lib)</li> <li>AIS LEO award recipients" additional info (website)</li> <li>(*) AIS fellows</li> <li>(*) AIS presidents</li> </ul>
	(**) Regular scholars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Their views of and experiences with the IS history</li> </ul>
Journals	<i>MISQ</i> , the first designated IS journal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The genesis of <i>MISQ</i> (a working paper)</li> <li>Interviews of EICs as oral history (AIS e-lib)</li> </ul>
	<i>JMIS</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interview of founding EIC as oral history (AIS e-lib)</li> </ul>
Conferences	ICIS, the first IS conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A list of detailed info of all ICIS meetings since 1980 (website)</li> <li>Photos from the planning meeting, the first meeting in 1980, and the 35th meeting (Facebook)</li> <li>(**) Recounting the first ICIS conference</li> <li>(**) Recounting the first ICIS doctoral consortium</li> </ul>
	AMCIS, the first one sponsored by AIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A list of detailed info of all AMCIS meetings (website)</li> <li>(*) Recounting the first AMCIS conference</li> </ul>
Associations	AIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AIS 20-year legacy booklet (website)</li> </ul>
	(**)IFIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IFIP TC-8</li> </ul>
Academic Institution	Business schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Timeline and institutional roles (AMCIS 2013 panel)</li> </ul>
Intellectual element	Intellectual core	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IS history by highly cited papers during 1975-1999 (a <i>CAIS</i> paper in this issue)</li> </ul>
	Sub-areas inside IS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technical and social history of software engineering (a <i>CAIS</i> paper in this issue)</li> </ul>
	Regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The origins of IS in different regions (ECIS 2013 panel)</li> <li>Early history of IS in the UK (a <i>CAIS</i> paper in this issue)</li> </ul>
Education	Education programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The evolution of IS education (ECIS 2014 panel)</li> <li>The first undergraduate program in the IS field (a <i>CAIS</i> paper in this issue)</li> <li>(*) The first doctoral programs in the IS field</li> </ul>



<b>Industry and practice</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The historical development of industries' and practice's influence on the future of IS (AMCIS 2014 panel)</li> <li>• (**) SIM and its role in <i>MISQ</i>, <i>ICIS</i>, <i>MISQE</i>, and other aspects of the IS field</li> <li>• (**) CEOs' principal concerns</li> </ul>
<b>Timelines of IS field</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timeline and institutional roles (AMCIS 2013 panel)</li> <li>• Multimedia interactive timeline for the field using Tiki-Toki (a link from website)</li> </ul>
<b>Methods for studying history</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to best represent IS history (PACIS 2013 panel)</li> <li>• Historiography (a <i>CAIS</i> paper in this issue)</li> </ul>

The people in an academic field are the most important factor. There have been many pioneers and influential figures who played a significant role in establishing and continuing the IS field's development. Several of these pioneers have been featured in previous IS history efforts, such as Enid Mumford (Avison, Bjørn-Andersen, Land, & Sørensen, 2006; Land, 2010; Porra & Hirschheim, 2007; Porra & Hirschheim, 2007) and Gordon Davis (Benbasat, Ives, Naumann, & Sambamurthy, 2005; Davis, 2005; Ives, Olson, & Weber, 2005). As a start and based on the guiding principles in Section III and logistical feasibility, I have focused on several pioneers' careers in the IS field by arranging interviews with them. Additional information was collected for AIS LEO award recipients that is provided on the website. Note that, although the views and experiences of the field's influential figures are important to depict its history, regular scholars' views can also be insightful. I hope future efforts can be made to collect more voices from a broader representatives in the IS community.

Another important factor is a field's academic environment, which could include journals, conferences, and associations. All of these environments need to be established properly in order to provide the necessary support for developing and maturing a field. These environments also need to be constantly monitored and nurtured to be healthy and supportive. Several journals served IS scholars in the early days, such as *Management Science*, *Academy of Management Journal*, *Academy of Management Review*, *Communications of the ACM*, *Computing Survey*, and *Decision Sciences* (see Bob Zmud's presentation in AMCIS 2013 panel). There were also associations and corresponding conferences in other fields in which IS scholars participated, such as the ACM Special Interest Group on Business Data Processing (SIGBDP) (which was founded in 1961 and later renamed as SIGMIS), IFIP TC8, Academy of Management, TIMS/ORSA (which was merged as INFORMS), and AIDS (later renamed to DSI) (Ives et al., 2005). The IS history initiative first focused on the first two designated IS journals (*MISQ* and *JMIS*), the first designated IS conference (ICIS), and the official association (AIS). It is regrettable that we could not focus on another top-ranked IS journal, *Information Systems Research (ISR)*, during this time. Interested readers can read Swanson, King, Benbasat, and Kemerer's (2010) summative paper on ISR's history. Another journal that is worth examining is *Information & Management*, which was founded the same year as *MISQ* and has published many IS papers. Similarly, our limited time did not allow us to focus on other important IS conferences.

To define a field and distinguish it from other fields is to reveal its intellectual interests. What should be considered the IS field's intellectual core has been a perennial topic ever since its early days (e.g., Borko 1965; Dickson et al. 1982; Gorry & Morton 1971; Dickson, 1981; Keen, 1980; Mason & Mitroff, 1973). Examining the intellectual core's historical development or evolution has been a popular exercise among IS scholars. Along with the intellectual core discussion and debate come the sub-areas in the IS field.

An academic field requires educational programs at various levels, which is also true for IS. The earliest documented educational efforts and curricula development can be traced back to early 60s and early 70s (e.g., Couger 1973; Mckenney & Tonge, 1971; Nunamaker, 1981; Sprowls, 1963; Teichroew, 1971). At the doctoral level, Hamilton, Ives, and Davis (1981) have compiled a comprehensive bibliography of 430 dissertations on MIS topics during 1973-1980. Collections of specific doctoral programs in some universities are being written and may become available soon. The London School of Economics' (LSE) website provides a complete listing of LSE IS PhDs (see <http://www.lse.ac.uk/management/programmes/phd/information-systems-and-innovation/ISIG-Past-Theses.aspx>).

Regardless of the intellectual core debates, many IS scholars agree that the IS field is not a pure science but an applied field. Industry and practice have played important roles in IS since its early days, and their strong connection with IS has been well documented (e.g., Gosden, 1960; Simmons, 1962; Thompson, 1958, 1960). How strong the connection is and should be have been debated constantly over the years. In addition, the field's evolution in different regions has led to significant differences in emphasis and approach (e.g., Buhl, Müller, Fridgen, & Röglinger, 2012). As one can see from several papers in this special issue and several oral history interviews, the

importance of early and continued industry involvement and sponsorship have been greatly recognized and appreciated.

One important historical effort of the IS field is to examine its timeline and identify important milestones, events, achievements, and so on along its life-cycle. The timeline can be along a single dimension such as intellectual development, educational programs, institutional structures, or industry involvement, among others. There are several sample timelines in the IS history initiative effort to demonstrate such diversity.

The final perspective of the thematic coverage is about the approaches, methods, and techniques for doing history research and writing in the IS field.

In the rest of this section, I highlight some of the tasks undertaken in the IS history initiative by providing detailed and personal recounts on them.

**People in the IS Field**

At the time of this writing, four pioneers had been interviewed about their careers and views for the IS field (Table 3 shows them in the order they were interviewed). Two additional interviews are planned for April 2015 (noted with a \* in Table 3). I encourage anyone interested to conduct more interviews in the future.

<b>Pioneer Name</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Phillip Ein-Dor	Oral history—video interview (Te’eni, 2013)
Andy Whinston	Oral history—video interview (Jacob, 2014)
Bill King	Oral history—video interview (Zhang, 2014b)
Eph McLean	Oral history—video interview (Zhang, 2014e)
* Gordon Davis	(to be done in April 2015)
* Alan Merten	(to be done in April 2015)

**Oral History—Interview with Phillip Ein-Dor**

Phillip received his PhD from CMU in 1971 and has been an active community member and contributor in many capacities to this day. Among many distinctions and in recognition of his many achievements during his career, Phillip was elected the 8th AIS president (2002-2003), an AIS fellow in 2000, and LEO award recipient in 2006. My personal interaction with Phillip started in 1998 while he was planning the *Journal of the Association for Information Systems*, AIS’s flagship journal. I learned later that, in 1996, Phillip was a member of the AIS publication committee and, together with Paul Gray, proposed establishing two AIS journals: the *Communications of AIS (CAIS)* and the *Journal of AIS (JAIS)*. On the AIS council’s approval, Paul and Phillip became the founding editors of these two journals, respectively. *JAIS* started publishing in 2000 on a monthly basis. My paper happened to be the inaugural paper for *JAIS* after four rounds of rigorous reviews. Phillip’s positive editorial attitude, work ethic, diligent work style, and his humble and kind personality while working with me, a junior scholar with few academic credentials at that time, had a significant impact on my own outlook on editorial responsibilities and good citizenship in my field.

The interview was conducted in November 2013 by Phillip’s PhD advisee, Dov Te’eni, who himself is a highly achieved IS scholar, a former AIS president, and an AIS fellow. In the Recanati School of Business at Tel Aviv University, Dov asked Phillip to reflect on his involvement in some of the IS field’s major achievements and on his sense of what has yet to be accomplished in its research and institutions. Philip began his insightful tour of the field with how he got to study information systems under Nobel Prize winner Herbert Simon.





**Figure 1. Interview of Phillip Ein-Dor by Dov Te'eni**

#### Oral History—Interview with Andy Whinston

Andy received his PhD in economics in 1962 and has been an active, prolific, creative, and influential scholar in his long and successful career. Among his many achievements, he funded the journal *Decision Support Systems* in 1985 when there were few IS journals, let alone IS journals for design and technical research, and *Journal of Organizational Computing* in 1991, which changed to *Journal of Organizational Computing and Electronic Commerce* in 1996. Among his many recognitions, Andy received a LEO award in 2005. Andy is one of the most prolific PhD supervisors in the IS field: he has produced more than 100 PhD students and continues producing. I happen to be one of his advisees. During my PhD study in early 90s, there would be around eight to ten students at a given time who would meet with him individually for half an hour on every Saturday. What amazed me most was that none of these students were working on the same or even similar topics at the time. I would constantly wonder how Andy could do it by switching his mind so quickly from one student's topic to another. He must have had some systematic way to work on these diverse topics simultaneously because each was hard enough for a student to grasp. I thought that to Andy, it would perhaps be like there was a "map of the battle field" and each student would have a unique place on this map, yet the students themselves might not be able to see the positions or roles of the other students. Later, when I became a professor and at times worked with multiple students at a given time, I could not help but reflect on what Andy did and eventually developed my own "map of the battle field" to not only handle the diverse topics of different students, but to actually enjoy the cross fertilizing, parallel progresses, and unique insights from different angles and perspectives. The "map of the battle field" eventually became my way of strategically developing and expanding my own research interests and streams. I am grateful to Andy's supervising and influence on me during my doctoral study that paved the foundation for what I became as a scholar today.

The interview was conducted by Andy's PhD advisee Varghese Jacob in May 2014 on UT Austin campus. Besides his distinguished scholarship as demonstrated by his large number of high-profile publications and endowed professorship, Varghese has been associate and senior associate dean in the business school at the University of Texas at Dallas. In the interview, Andy reflected his early years in research and in practice such as with stories of the companies he founded or co-founded. Andy expressed his pro-interdisciplinary view for conducting research and considered that researchers should not be restricted by disciplinary boundaries that are laid out for the purpose of university administration. He shared his unique views on how to be a front-running researcher by focusing on real-world issues and phenomena. He provided insightful advices for PhD students on what should they focus on in the program, what types of research to do, how to do research, and how they could get ahead with their tenure path by publishing early while they are in the PhD program. Andy also provided his vision for the future for the IS field and beyond.



**Figure 2. Varghese Jacob Interviewing Andy Whinston**

### Oral History—Interview with Bill King

Bill would be one of the few IS pioneers with whom I have had the most firsthand impressions. By this I mean that my knowing Bill is more than just from reading his papers, reading his name in various media and situations, and so on, which I consider not so much firsthand and more like forming impressions by name's sake. It was August 1995, the time I was just about to start my career as a junior faculty member. My paper was accepted by the first AIS conference, held in Pittsburgh (later the conference was changed to AMCIS), and Bill was the first AIS president and was, thus, very present at the conference. Seeing him walking around and interacting with others and listening to his speeches all in person during the conference allowed me to form a strong impression of who he is as a person, not just a name. Of course, I was a freshly graduated junior faculty member at the conference with hundreds of attendees, and he probably never knew about me at the time or heard of me before he retired. Then, one day, I emailed him to ask if he could help me with an IS history project by participating in an interview of his role as *MISQ*'s EIC. A handful of emails and several months later, we set up the interview time and location. Given Bill has retired and does not go to any IS conferences anymore, I made a special trip to visit him in his Pittsburgh home in September 2014 before he traveled to Florida for the winter.

Inside a nicely built, spacious two-story house, Bill warmly greeted me and Dennis Galletta who helped with the logistics and did the videotaping and editing. At the picturesque place he selected for the interview, right in front of the fireplace in the living room, Dennis and I set up the equipment for the interview; at the same time, I started chatting with Bill about some related topics. The interview about his experience as *MISQ*'s EIC was conducted first (see the description below). After the *MISQ* interview, we decided to do a career interview where we would have no prepared questions and would improvise as we go. During the *MISQ* interview, Bill started a little bit rigid and slow, but gradually opened up and relaxed. By the time of the career interview, he was funny, eager to talk, and became animated with various emotions on his face. During the interview, we talked about a lot of topics. I learnt that Bill taught his first IS doctoral seminar in the late 60s. He was an associate editor for the system department in the journal *Management Science* in the 70s, which allowed him to be involved with many IS scholars as authors and reviewers. Bill recalled many of his efforts on building academic infrastructures, such as journals (*MISQ* as a founding AE and the 2nd EIC, and *ISR* as the founder), conferences (ICIS and AMCIS), and associations (INFORMS, which was merged from TIMS and ORSA, and AIS), among others. The interview became such a fun activity and the outcome was unexpectedly exciting in my opinion.





**Figure 3. Interview of Bill King by Ping Zhang**

#### Oral History—Interview with Eph McLean

An IS history without Eph McLean would be severely incomplete. Eph has been instrumental and virtually everywhere during the IS field's establishment and evolution. As he said at one time: he is living in the history of the IS field. To highlight just a few aspects of Eph's career and the connection to the IS field: he started working as a practitioner during 1958-1965, and continued to be closely connected with industry and practice via involvement with SIM and other industry and practice sectors. He introduced one of the earliest programming language courses in the early days of the field and wrote three books on strategic information systems while he was still in the PhD program in the late 60s. He was instrumental in the UCLA doctoral program in IS, one of the first doctoral programs in the IS field in the world. He helped build several academic infrastructures by being one of the founding associate editors of *MISQ* (a position he held for eight consecutive years), one of ICIS's founding fathers, the editor of the first ICIS proceedings, one of the founders and the second executive director of AIS, and was responsible for the merger of AIS and ICIS. Eph is also the co-author of the most cited paper in the IS field, on the IS success model. Eph became one of the first AIS fellows in 1999 and a LEO award recipient in 2007. By the way, as a skilled artist, Eph created the logo for the ICIS proceedings and the logo for AIS.

Eph is one of the few who have attended every single ICIS. At ICIS 2014 in Auckland, New Zealand, I interviewed him about his long career and his views of the IS field. In the interview, Eph humbly called himself "the Forest Gump of the IS field". He recollected many of the major milestones of his career and the IS field in such a vivid way that he made a viewer/reader feel like watching a movie that spans 60+ years of time. He also pointed out what he is doing at the moment after he stepped down from being the department chair at Georgia State University. Although approaching 80 years old, Eph shows no signs of slowing down or retiring. He is as busy as he can be and as ever interested in every aspect of our field.



**Figure 4. Interview of Eph McLean by Ping Zhang**

### EICs of the First Two Journals Designated for the IS Field

Editors-in-chief (EICs) of IS journals also rank among the IS field’s influential figures. They play important roles in shaping the intellectual boundaries and developing and nurturing an institutional culture. It is beneficial from a historical perspective to learn from these EICs on their views and reflections. Due to limited time, the current effort of covering these figures has focused only on the EICs of the first two designated IS journals: *MISQ* and *JMIS*. Although only these EICs were featured in the current effort, it should be noted that there are a good number of other people and organizations who have played important roles in these journals. For example, *MISQ* started as a joint publication of The Society for Management Information Systems (later renamed SIM) and The Management Information Systems Research Center at University of Minnesota (MISRC), of which Gordon Davis was the director who heavily supported Gary Dickson to fund the journal. There had been “an army” of consulting editors and associate editors from both academia and industry, managing editors, publishers, and editorial policy committee members who have all played important roles during *MISQ*’s life.

Table 4 summarizes the EICs of the two journals and corresponding outcomes. Figure 5 shows recent photos of these EICs as they appeared in the interviews or in recent meetings. In this sub-section, I provide some of my personal interactions with and/or observations about these EICs and some of the fun parts, while providing some introduction to their contributions. The overall impression I get from all these EICs is that, despite the success they have in their careers, they all are very kind and humble human beings.

**Table 4: Reflections from EICs of MISQ and JMIS**

	<b>EIC Name</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
<b>MISQ</b>	Gary Dickson	Founding (1977-1982)	A working article
	William King	2 <sup>nd</sup> (1983-1985)	Oral history—video interview (Zhang, 2014c)
	Warren McFarlan	3 <sup>rd</sup> (1986-1988)	Oral history—video interview (Zhang, 2014g)
	James Emery	4th (1989-1991)	Oral history—video interview (Zhang, 2014f)
	Blake Ives	5th (1992-1994)	Oral history—video interview (Zhang, 2013a)
	Robert Zmud	6th (1995-1998)	Oral history—video interview (Zhang, 2014d)
	Allen Lee	7th (1999-2001)	Oral history—video interview (Zhang, 2014a)
	Ronald Weber	8th (2002-2004)	Oral history—video interview (Zhang, 2013e)
	Carol Saunders	9th (2005-2007)	Oral history—video interview (Zhang, 2013b)
	Detmar Straub	10th (2008-2012)	Oral history—video interview (Zhang, 2013c)
	Paulo Goes	11th (2013- )	Oral history—video interview (Zhang, 2013d)
<b>JMIS</b>	Vladimir Zwass	Founding (1984- )	Oral history—video interview (Zhang, 2013f)



Dr. Dickson, Founding MISQ EIC



Dr. King, 2<sup>nd</sup> MISQ EIC



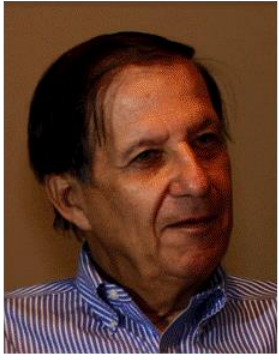
Dr. McFarlan, 3<sup>rd</sup> MISQ EIC



Dr. Emery, 4<sup>th</sup> MISQ EIC



Dr. Ives, 5<sup>th</sup> MISQ EIC



Dr. Bob Zmud, 6<sup>th</sup> MISQ EIC



Dr. Allen Lee, 7<sup>th</sup> MISQ EIC



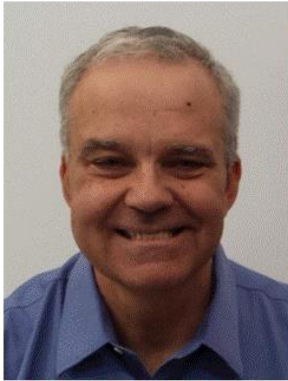
Dr. Weber, 8<sup>th</sup> MISQ EIC



Dr. Saunders, 9<sup>th</sup> MISQ EIC



Dr. Straub, 10<sup>th</sup> MISQ EIC



Dr. Goes, 11<sup>th</sup> MISQ EIC



Dr. Zwass, JMIS EIC

Figure 5. EICs of MISQ and JMIS

### Gary Dickson—The *MIS Quarterly*: A Genesis (A Working Paper)

With my PhD dissertation on visualization for decision making support, for which I used a lab experiment for an empirical study, the IS papers that influenced my work most were those of or on the Minnesota Experiments and on the Minnesota Managerial Graphics project. As such, Gary Dickson is one of the most familiar names with which I became acquainted from the IS literature during my PhD study. Yet, I never met him in person prior to contacting him for this history project. On finishing my AMCIS conference in Savannah, GA in August 2014, I visited him in his South Carolina home. Through additional research I eventually learned that Gary has made many important contributions to the IS field, especially during its early days. Besides being *MISQ*'s founding EIC, Gary was the conference chair of the first ICIS in 1980. He spent 29 years (1965-1994) at the University of Minnesota and, along with Gordon Davis, was instrumental for its productive and influential PhD program. Being one of the earliest IS PhD programs in the world, it has produced many high-profile IS scholars as field leaders. To address the lack of IS professors in the early days of the field, Gary directed the AACSB Summer MIS Faculty Development Institute from 1982 and 1989 to re-train scholars from other fields to teach and do research in IS. Having worked in industry prior to getting his PhD, Gary maintained and strengthened his connection to industry and practice, including his heavy involvement with SIM (or, originally, The Society for Management Information Systems).

A founding EIC would face a set of very different and usually a lot more challenging issues than any succeeding EICs. This was particularly the case for *MISQ*'s founding editor (at the time, the term senior editor was used for the editor-in-chief's role). While a videotaped interview might capture some of the issues, it became obvious to both Gary and me during our planning stage that the video interview would be very limited in capturing the depth and breadth of founding *MISQ*. For this reason, Gary decided to first provide written information about some background and related issues, then construct a set of unique questions that would fit just *MISQ*'s founding editor. The writing eventually snowballed into something extensive and exceptionally rich. This is the paper, *The MIS Quarterly: A Genesis*, that may become available sometime in the future. In a diligent effort, Gary filled a gap in the writing of IS history that describes the historical background in the mid-70s. His detailed recounting of founding an IS journal in the dawn of the IS field is a unique contribution. Although I can relate to some of the challenges he described by considering my own experience of founding an IS journal (in the 2000s), the extent and depth of my own challenges cannot be compared to what Gary faced at the time.

### Oral History—Interviews with 10 *MIS Quarterly* Editors-in-Chief

From December 2013 to December 2014, I was fortunate to be able to interview all of *MISQ*'s other 10 EICs. I say fortunate because it took a lot of effort on the interviewees' side to find time, coordinate logistics, prepare questions, do the interviews, and review the finished products. Several of them also helped find professional videotaping services. All these interviews were captured on videos and published in the AIS e-lib. If necessary, they can be transformed into other media such as podcasts and transcribed text.

**William King (2nd EIC):** as mentioned earlier, Bill's interview was conducted in his Pittsburgh home. There were some fun facts Bill revealed in his interview about *MISQ* and about the IS field at that time. For example, he did not like the name "assistant editor" and thought it would sound like someone who brings coffee to the editor, diminishing the important role of such a position; thus, he negotiated the "associate editor" name for the journal when he was invited by Gary to be one. Bill became one of the three founding associate editors for the theory and research section (the other two were Milton Jenkins and Eph McLean), in which he served six years before becoming the second EIC. During his tenure as the EIC, he started the issues and opinions section to complement the original theory and research and applications sections; he also added the editorials (editor's notes) in which the EIC could directly communicate with the readers. He reached out to numerous schools and encouraged their professors to use *MISQ* as the outlet for their research, which raised the journal's submission numbers and eventually created a backlog of accepted papers (there was none before him) to ensure each issue was published on time and more journal pages were added. To promote the journal and raise awareness about its quality, he registered the journal in the Social Science index and tirelessly wrote letters to many deans in business schools to justify the journal's role in IS scholars' tenure and promotion evaluations. Essentially, he built and secured *MISQ*'s relevance to the academic community (McFarlan, personal communication, 2015). When asked for any advice he might give for the future of the journal or the IS field, he encouraged everyone in the IS field to do something to define the distinctive competencies only possessed by IS people, and no one else, in order to sustain the IS field.

**Warren McFarlan (3rd EIC):** on a sunny summer day in June 2014, I met with Warren for the first time on the beautiful Harvard Business School campus where he has been a lifelong member starting in 1955 as a student and in 1964 as a faculty member. In Warren's own words, he was brought up in the IS field: he was the second IS doctoral student graduated Harvard Business School and has spent his entire career in the IS field. Warren had a significant role in introducing MIS materials in all major programs at HBS in the 60s. He has published a long list of books and I am now a proud owner of a personally signed copy of his most recent book *Can China Lead? Reaching*

*the Limits of Power and Growth*. I have heard about and been amazed after checking his biography for his prolific and influential Harvard Business School cases that have been adopted in many business classes all over the world.

Warren became an associate editor for the application section in 1985, the year before he became the EIC. According to Warren, he was selected to solve a different problem. The academic links were up and running but *MISQ*'s relationships with SIM were frayed. SIM's basic concern was that there was little relevance in the journal to practitioners in the field and that they should, therefore, perhaps not support it. Warren was picked for the job because, at that time, he was one of the most practitioner-oriented IS faculty members at a major university. He had six papers in the Harvard Business Review between 1981 and 1986 on information technology (at that time HBR devoted considerable effort speaking to the practitioner about IT). These papers included *Portfolio Approach to Information Technology*, *The Information Archipelago* (a three-part paper), and *IT as a Competitive Weapon*. He was also co-author of a new text and case book entitled *Corporate Information Systems Management*, which appeared in both an academic and a practitioner version. He was the chair of Harvard's very successful two-week executive program that ran annually for 120 CIOs (McFarlan, personal communication, 2015). Thus, Warren's primary goal was to make sure *MISQ* remained engaged in practice. He negotiated to be on the SIM board so that he could confront the critics face-to-face and also be seen as responsive to their needs. This led him to write for every paper a one-pager executive overview to provide busy CIOs with each paper's highlights to inform them whether it would be useful for their particular situations. This enhanced the relevance of research papers to practitioner readers and "calm[ed] the waters" in his words. Intellectually, he stressed during his term that IT is more than just the backend implementation tools but has strategic values that can bring new products, new services, and competitive edge to companies. During his second year (1987), he changed the editorial board structure by introducing a position named senior associate editor for theory and research, with Izak Benbasat being the first person holding the position. This senior AE position continued for a total of eight years (Izak three years, Michael Ginzberg three years, and Gerry DeSanctis almost two years) until Blake changed the editorial board structure (see below). During Warren's third year in 1988, he merged the two sections (theory and research, and application) and put all associate editors together, a structure that has been the same to this day. As Warren sees it, *MISQ* will continuously fight the battle between rigor and relevance, something many of the younger generations in the IS field have witnessed and wondered at.

It is interesting to note that while Warren did all these contributions to *MISQ*, he is one of the two *MISQ* EICs who never published in *MISQ* during his entire career. Warren believed that the crying need for *MISQ* was to provide a place for important building block research papers that academics can build on, but he said that:

*Most of my work over the years, conversely has been exploratory field-based case oriented. The careful collection of this work helped enable the development of researchable hypotheses. At HBS, we have multiple paths to tenure. One valued path is the ability to do creative course development which provides materials to educators and early insights to practitioners. This is why my work has mostly not been suitable for MISQ. (McFarlan, personal communication, 2015)*

**James Emery (4th EIC):** the interview with Jim took the longest preparation time (spanning a six-month period with 100+ emails) and the outcome proved well worth the effort. First of all, I needed to find him, a person who retired from the academic IS field since 1999 and whom I had never met or heard before. The effort started in June 2014 and, with multiple attempts in contacting different sources, we eventually connected through a mutual colleague. Then the interview planning took place and, initially, I was hoping to conduct the interview in August when I visited California for personal reasons. The logistics did not work out. However, I was able to have a pleasant meeting with Jim face-to-face for about half an hour during that trip. The preparation continued from that time, primarily with Jim helping locate a professional videotaping service. The interview was finally conducted in Monterey, California, prior to my trip to attend ICIS 2014 in Auckland.

Jim is a pioneer in the IS field. He started his IS career in 1956 as a practitioner, only two years after the first industrial application of a Univac computer at GE. He went back to school to earn his PhD at the Sloan School of MIT, and then became one of the early IS scholars in academia. He was at the ICIS planning meeting in June 1980 and was the arrangement committee chair of the first ICIS meeting, for which he was responsible for making ICIS physically happen. Along with James Senn and Bayard Wynne, Jim was one of the three founding associate editors for *MISQ*'s application section, a capacity he held for six consecutive years. He became the 4th EIC of *MISQ* and, just like Warren, Jim never published in *MISQ* during his entire career due to the nature of his work. On retiring from academia, he continued to work part time in non-profit organizations and, at times, was involved in developing or using information systems in these organizations. Jim was also heavily involved in the early days of SIM and served as its third president. Compared to all other EICs, Jim is in a unique position in that he has worked in both academia and outside, and in both for-profit and non-profit sectors. Thus, he has unique views on the practice side of the IS field.

**Blake Ives (5th EIC):** Blake Ives is another name I became acquainted with from the literature during my dissertation research. Since then I often easily spotted him at various IS conferences with the point he addressed at the beginning of his interview: his tall height. Blake, of course, is also visible not only because of his height. Besides being *MISQ*'s 5th EIC, he was among the first AIS fellows in 1999, a LEO award recipient in 2010, and the 7th AIS president.

Blake actually “grew up” with *MISQ*. That is, his initial interaction with the journal was when he was becoming a scholar—it was during his doctoral study times at Minnesota. According to Blake, Gary would bring manuscripts to the doctoral seminars and ask the students to proofread them. Blake then became an author of many papers in *MISQ*, a reviewer, and an associate editor before becoming the EIC. During his term, in order to strengthen the journal's tie to SIM and its members by making *MISQ* papers more readable to them, Blake built on what Warren started and Jim continued with an editor's executive overview for each published paper by printing these overviews on rose-pink colored papers, putting them together in the very front of each issue, and allowing readers to tear them off from the journal's binding and distribute them separately. The first issue during his term showed a new design of the journal cover, the third design for *MISQ*, that showed the TOC of each issue on the cover, plus many other changes. In the last issue during his term (Volume 18, Issue 4), there was a significant editorial structure change: the term editor-in-chief was used for the first time, four senior editors were established (Izak Benbasat, Gerardine DeSanctis, Allen Lee, and Robert Zmud), and a total of 28 associate editors were appointed. This editorial structure has been in place since then, although *MISQ* now has many more senior editors and associate editors. Blake initiated the electronic platforms for *MISQ* as his term closed, and continued to serve the journal by implementing capabilities of using emails and the Web for submitting, review, and disseminating manuscripts.

**Bob Zmud (6th EIC):** Bob received his PhD in 1974 and has since been an active and influential scholar who has earned many recognitions, including AIS fellow in 2003, and a LEO award in 2008. His early work on cognitive styles and individual differences in information systems development and use were among those seminal papers in some of my reading lists during my doctoral studies.

Compared to the EICs before him whose terms were usually three years (except for Gary who held the position for six years), Bob held the EIC position for a four-year term because he thought that would allow him to make the real difference he wanted to make. In 1996, Bob succeeded in adding AIS as a sponsor for *MISQ* and having the AIS logo printed on its cover. During his term, Bob emphasized making *MISQ* more reputable inside business schools by raising the review quality and making the journal comparable to other management journals. He also broadened the domains of papers published in the journal to include more than just managerial papers, such as economics and design science. His goal was to have *MISQ* represent the best work of the IS field even more effectively than it had done until then.

**Allen Lee (7th EIC):** a fact not well known to many IS scholars is that Allen received his doctoral degree in Architecture and Planning in 1982, then entered the IS field in the mid-80s through the AACSB Summer MIS Faculty Development Institute that Gary Dickson directed. Since then, Allen developed into a prolific and influential IS scholar and became an AIS fellow in 2005. Although I had professional interaction with Allen in the 90s, I got to know him in person through the Chinese American Professors in Information Systems (CAPIS) group that Allen founded in the early 2000s. Through informal gatherings at IS conferences, CAPIS provided a forum for younger Chinese scholars to network and learn about academic life in the US.

Different from other EICs that I have observed, Allen did not have a pre-set plans or objectives when he took over *MISQ*'s EIC position. Yet, he did have some high-level goals that provided guidance during his term. This allowed him to be adaptive and to use opportunities when they came along to make positive changes to the journal. Among several improvements were changing the review process to be more developmental, adding more women and international scholars to the editorial boards, making *MISQ* a more friendly place for qualitative and design science research in IS, and suggesting a different venue for practitioners, an idea that eventually led to the establishment of a separate journal designated for the practitioner community, *MISQ Executive*. In the interview, Allen has serious advice for *MISQ*, other IS journals, and IS scholars regarding future research in the field. In the later part of his interview, Allen also described his experiences with the AACSB summer institute that transformed him into an IS scholar.

**Ron Weber (8th EIC):** Ron started his IS career as a programmer, system analyst, and project manager during 1970-1973, before going back to school to get his MBA and PhD. Ron is considered the first Australian to receive a PhD in IS and is one of the first full professors in IS in Australia (Clarke, 2008). Ron's recognition is beyond Australia. He is well respected and referenced by IS scholars all over the world. Among the many awards and recognitions, Ron became an AIS fellow in 2000 and an AIS LEO award recipient in 2011.



Ron is another *MISQ* EIC who “grew up” with the journal, just like Blake, because Ron was also in the midst of his doctoral study in Minnesota at the time *MISQ* was founded. Interestingly, though, for most of his career, Ron felt his work was not relevant to *MISQ* because his work focused on more technical topics rather than managerial and organizational topics. In fact, Ron never published in the journal before he became the EIC in 2002, and his first *MISQ* paper was published in 2008 after his term ended in 2004. Despite Ron’s continued belief that his work was not relevant to *MISQ*’s domain, he was frequently asked to review for it, then served as a SE, and eventually became the EIC, the first EIC of *MISQ* who was from outside North America. During his term, Ron continued Allen’s efforts to encourage papers with a broader range of topics. He greatly increased submissions to the journal and subsequently increased the journal’s citation counts and impact factor. This has increased *MISQ*’s impact both in and outside the IS field.

**Carol Saunders (9th EIC):** Carol was a junior program analyst during 1969-1970, then a senior systems analyst from 1972 to 1974 prior to getting her PhD in 1979. Among many recognitions, Carol was named an AIS fellow in 2003 and received an AIS LEO award in 2010. Being energetic and enthusiastic is part of being Carol. Carol and I were on several conference panels in the past and we always had fun together.

As the only female EIC of *MISQ* to date, Carol has made her unique contributions to the journal and subsequently to the IS field. Her “diamond cutting” analogy for reviewers and editors to help authors develop their manuscripts has become a well-received position by subsequent *MISQ* EICs and editors in other major IS journals. Realizing the important role AEs play during such a developmental review process, she introduced the best AE award of the year to incentivize and recognize best AE efforts. She continued Allen and Ron’s efforts of broadening the editorial board to be more global and more representative of the broad range of topics studied and methods employed by IS researchers. She also increased the number of papers published, partly by resizing the physical size and font size of the printed journal and by introducing a 5th issue for special issue topics (which, for a number of reasons, did not continue). Carol has some concerns about the overall review processes in top journals in our field and the potential negative effect they may have on our younger scholars. She thinks an important place to start improving the process is by increasing the senior editors’ accountability and by developing and *enforcing* policies at top journals to ensure a fair review process (Saunders, personal communication, 2015).

**Detmar Straub (10th EIC):** with two master’s and two doctoral degrees, Detmar is a prolific author and often ranked among top IS scholars in terms of top journal publications. He has held major editorial positions in many top IS journals and chaired several IS conferences. Among many of his distinctions, Detmar became an AIS fellow in 2005 and an AIS LEO award recipient in 2012. My first interaction with Detmar started in 2004 when Dennis Galletta and I were co-editing two volumes for the AMIS series on HCI research in the IS field (Galletta & Zhang, 2006; Zhang & Galletta, 2006). Detmar co-authored a chapter on cultural and globalization issues of IT use in organizations. Detmar was later a SE for a *JAIIS* paper I co-authored and his developmental approach and great insights significantly improved the paper’s quality and value to the IS field.

Detmar was associated with *MISQ* in many capacities as a reviewer, author, associate publisher (a position that no longer exists), associate editor (in early days, which today would be SE given its responsibilities), and senior editor prior to becoming its EIC. Next to the founding EIC Gary who held the position for six years, Detmar held it for five for several reasons. I recall that, from the beginning of his term in 2008, I have seen Detmar giving presentations about his vision and strategy for the journal at all major IS conferences and beyond, such as during his visits to various universities overseas (I happened to be visiting some of these universities at the same time). He has been very vocal and persistent, in particular in discussing type I and type II errors in reviewing and advocating for not rejecting good papers. He strongly encouraged blue sky research that might be risky yet innovative and thought provoking. He continued the developmental review process, encouraged a broader range of research topics, and increased the number of published papers per issue. In the interview, Detmar gave a set of suggestions for the future of both *MISQ* and the IS field.

**Paulo Goes (11th and current EIC):** with an engineering background, Paulo received his PhD in 1991 and became the MIS department chair at University of Arizona in 2008. I first met Paulo when we were on the same panel at the Third China Summer Workshop on Information Management (CSWIM) in Guangzhou, China, in 2009.

Like Ron, Paulo did not think *MISQ* was a target for his research in his early career due to the types of papers *MISQ* published at the time. Then as his research foci shifted and the coverage of *MISQ* broadened, Paulo started publishing in *MISQ* in 2004 and served *MISQ* as a reviewer, a guest AE, a guest SE, and a regular AE before becoming its EIC in 2013. At the time of this interview, Paulo was still during his first year as the EIC of *MISQ*. He told me how amazed he was by the passion the IS community has shown toward *MISQ*. He then shared some of his visions and objectives for being the EIC. His primary focus is on the intellectual areas that can be considered relevant to *MISQ*. In particular, he wanted *MISQ* to encourage more inter- and intra-disciplinary research as a way to

address broad problems and generate broad impacts, and to be more inclusive to cover various types and streams of research in the IS field.

### Oral History—Interview with JMIS Editor-in-Chief Vladimir Zwass

Vladimir Zwass received his PhD in Computer Science from Columbia University in 1975. His PhD dissertation bridged computer science and economics, and the supervisor in economics was William Vickrey, winner of the Nobel Prize in Economics in 1996. Vladimir represents one type of IS scholars who came to the IS field with formal training in technological fields. Among the many accomplishments during his successful career, Vladimir founded the *Journal of Management Information Systems (JMIS)* in 1984, the *International Journal of Electronic Commerce (IJEC)* in 1996, and a series of volumes named *Advances in Management Information Systems (AMIS)* in 2003.

My first interaction with Vladimir goes back almost fifteen years in 1999 when my paper was in the process of being published in *IJEC*, the top-ranked journal on e-commerce. He was also an invited speaker in the annual pre-ICIS workshop on HCI in MIS that I chaired. More in-depth interaction came around 2003 when Vladimir invited me to edit a volume on HCI in IS for the AMIS series. Eventually, the exploration of the ideas led to two volumes with 37 chapters that were co-edited by me and Dennis Galletta. I maintained continued interaction with Vladimir with editorial duties related to *JMIS* (a special issue sponsored by SIGHCI and on the editorial board).

*JMIS* is the second academic journal designated to the IS field. It started publishing in the summer of 1984 as a quarterly journal, and became one of the top three IS journals, a ranking that is constantly maintained in several journal-ranking studies (e.g., Hardgrave & Walstrom, 1997; Lowry, Romans, & Curtis, 2004; Lowry et al., 2013; Mylonopoulos & Theoharakis, 2001; Peffers & Ya, 2003; Rainer & Miller, 2005; Walstrom & Hardgrave, 2001). 2013 was *JMIS*'s 30th anniversary. I was fortunate to be able to interview Vladimir at during the journal's anniversary time at the 2013 ICIS conference in Milan, Italy. In the interview, Vladimir provided some background of founding the journal and his visions and strategies in establishing *JMIS* as one of the top IS journals.

### The First Designated Conference in the IS Field in US

The International Conference on Information Systems (ICIS) was the very first designated IS conference in US. There is much history about the initial idea for the conference among a few IS scholars who met at a workshop in TIMS conference in Denver, CO, in 1979. An official planning meeting was held at UCLA in May 1980, and the first meeting was held in Philadelphia in December 1980. The original name of the conference was Conference on Information Systems (CIS). The first proceedings, however, had the word "International" in its title, which consciously or subconsciously made it an international conference from its beginning. The conference was officially renamed as International Conference on Information Systems in 1985 when it was held in Indianapolis, Indiana. There are additional stories about ICIS's evolution, such as changing its locations to outside the US for the first time in the 1990 meeting, and merging with AIS in 2002. Everyone in the IS field would probably know about ICIS and may have participated in it at least once. It is considered the most prestigious international conference in the IS field, and its importance in the IS field is beyond what words can describe. Thus, it has a significant place in IS history.

As part of the IS history initiative, a detailed list of all ICIS meetings, including locations, themes, organizing committees, special occasions, and so on was compiled with the help from a group of colleagues and made available at the history website. To encourage people to become involved in collecting ICIS's history, photos from the planning meeting and the first and subsequent meetings are posted on the ICIS Facebook page.

### Academic Institutions' Roles in the IS Field

IS programs have been found in a variety of schools in academic institutions. IS programs are largely in schools of business or management. More than ten years ago, AIS conducted a member survey and found that about half of the members at that time belonged to a business school, and the other half spread out in a variety of schools such as information science, computing, engineering, social sciences, and others. Examining the academic institution's roles is an interesting angle to understand the development of the IS field. Over the past decades, there have been debates, discussions, and proposals on where the IS programs should be located in an academic institute that may best benefit the field's development and evolution (e.g., Avison & Ein-Dor, 2007).

### AMCIS 2013 Panel—Timeline and Institutional Roles of the IS Field

At AMCIS 2013 in Chicago, four LEO award recipients (Izak Benbasat, Eph McLean, Rick Watson, and Bob Zmud) formed a panel that covered two topics: the IS field timelines and institutional roles. Bob examined various institutional structures of IS programs in business schools in the early days and some of the related causes and issues.



## The Intellectual History in the IS Field

Some current efforts have yielded outcomes that focus on the intellectual history of the entire IS field, the origins of IS in various regions or countries, and the intellectual history of some specific research areas such as software engineering.

Paper Preview: [Making Sense of the History of IS Research 1975-1999: A View of Highly Cited Articles \(Iivari, 2015\)](#)

There have been different ways of illustrating the intellectual development of the IS field. Juhani Iivari used citation analysis of 400+ highly cited IS papers published between 1975-1999 to make sense of the IS intellectual landscape. Based on the data analysis, Juhani identifies several critical stages of the IS field in terms of its intellectual development: the early formative years (1975-1980), late formative years (1981-1986), the first sprint of growth (1987-1993), and the second sprint of growth (1994-1999).



### Panel - IS History: Timeline and Institutional Roles



Figure 6. Panelists at AMCIS 2013

### ECIS 2013—The Origins of IS in Different Regions

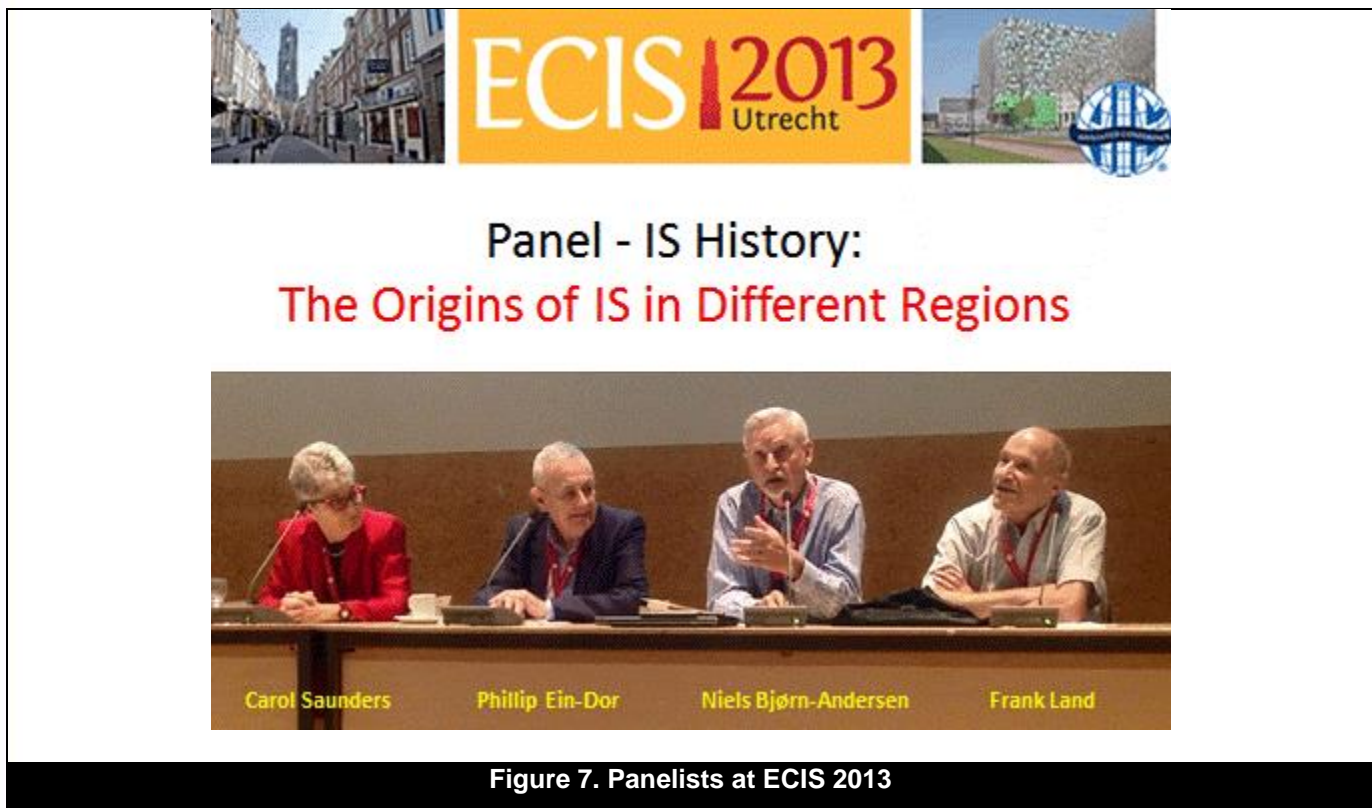
The ECIS 2013 panel was actually the first IS history panel as part of the IS history initiative. The conference was held in Utrecht, Netherland, a city celebrating the 300th anniversary of the Treaty of Utrecht in 2013 and the conference theme was “beyond borders” (<https://sites.google.com/site/ecis2013nl/traveling/tourist-information>). Thus, it was a fitting moment and place to examine the IS field on its various origins in terms of the communities, infrastructures, and intellectual challenges and advances. Four LEO award recipients (Niels Bjorn-Andersen, Phillip Ein-Dor, Frank Land, and Carol Saunders) participated in the panel.

Niels recollected the origins of IS communities in Scandinavia with milestones such as the first of a long row of Nordic PhD summer schools starting in Gimo near Stockholm in the summer of 1970, the information systems research seminars (IRIS) running annually since 1978, the first ICIS outside US in Copenhagen in 1990, and the European directory of IS faculty in 1993. Copenhagen Business School started the IS bachelor minor program and a full IS master's program in 1976. Some of the earliest IS books authored by European scholars appeared in 1973 (Langefors, 1973). This Nordic development was later merged with efforts organized in The International Federation of Information Process (IFIP), which was originally founded by UNESCO in 1960 and had organized its work in so-called technical committees. IFIT Technical Committee TC-8 was on information systems and was established in 1976. Niels also introduced the Scandinavian approach to IS which emphasized relevance to practice. He believed that we as a field should focus on three things going forward: being more relevant, providing measurable value to three key stakeholders (students, industry/public administration, and policy makers), and being more strategic and addressing decision makers' needs.

Phillip presented the results from an empirical study on publications from the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East region of 17 countries in seven major IS journals during the 1977 and 2012 period. The observations were that:

- (1) There is little homogeneity, no common views of the discipline, no Middle Eastern school of IS, and, even in culturally homogeneous parts, it is questionable whether there is any commonality in IS field development.
- (2) The IS field has taken hold and is developing slowly, although at different rates in different countries.
- (3) Some particular institutions are important for developing the IS field in certain countries.
- (4) Several region expats (people who were born in the region but reside outside it) publish as much as or more than they did in their native countries, which leads one to wonder if those countries leverage the presence of natives in global centers.

Phillip also reflected on the IS field specifically in Israel since the early days in the 50s: he noted education programs in the 70s, a strong publish-or-perish culture, and the relatively high percentage of graduates returning after studying abroad. Carol recalled some of the pre-ICIS events such as ACM being founded in 1947, TIMS in 1953, SMIS/SIM in 1968, and IFIP TC-8 in 1976. Then she presented a timeline of major IS conferences including ICIS, ACIS, ECIS, PACIS, AMCIS, and the formation of AIS and its amalgamation with ICIS. Frank focused on the UK and recounted some of the earliest office machinery communities, intellectual changes for practitioners and academics, and speculated what we have missed.



[Paper Preview: Early History of the Information Systems Discipline in the UK: An Account based on Living through the Period \(Land, 2015\)](#)

Based on the presentation at the ECIS 2013 IS history panel, Frank provides a more detailed recount of the early history of the IS field in the UK in this *CAIS* paper. He examines various IS communities in the UK that have all played roles in the IS field's development, such as wartime, business and administration, the office machine, specialist services and consultancy, scientific/engineering and research, government, education and training, and institutions and associations. He revisits some of the intellectual challenges and advances for different key constituents, such as IS practitioners in organizations, citizens and authorities, and IS academics. He speculates about some sections in which we might have missed our opportunities as IS domains. Finally, Frank reflects on some of the lessons we have learned from our history and points out some of the potential future emphases.

[Paper Preview: Book Review: The Technical and Social History of Software Engineering \(Land, 2015\)](#)

Software engineering as a sub-field in computer science is a close cousin of the IS field and played significant roles in the early days for the thinking and practice of the development of information systems in organizations. Of course,

personally, it was very close to my heart because that blue-colored *Software Engineering* book introduced me to IS practice and the IS field. Thus, understanding the history of the software engineering sub-field is relevant from the IS history perspective. In reviewing Capers Jones' book, Frank summarizes the key points and also provides his own view of key factors in the history of the software engineering sub-field.

### **The First Educational Programs in the IS Field**

IS programs are offered at all possible levels with a variety of formats across the world at the undergraduate, master's, and the doctoral levels. Examination of educational programs and their evolutions can provide great insight on the IS field and its evolution. Similar to any perspective of IS history, the first educational programs are worth special attention. In addition, one has to be sensitive to the variety of programs in different countries, regions, or cultures, and particular university settings that provide a unique context for the particular programs in that setting. Recent efforts have yielded two concrete outcomes: one paper in this special issue, and one panel at ECIS 2014. An ongoing effort is set to examine the first doctoral programs in the IS field in US.

**Paper Preview: [Stretching from Punch Card / Programming to Business Data Processing and Business Information Systems \(Shim, Pearson, Marett, & Moore, 2015\)](#)**

Based on the record that can be found so far, the very first undergraduate program in IS in an accredited college of business in the world might be the one created in Mississippi State University in 1963. In this paper, J. P. Shim, Rodney Pearson, Kent Marett, and Charles Moore recount the creation of the program and its evolution over the five decades.

**[ECIS 2014 Panel—The Evolution of IS Education](#)**

At ECIS 2014 in Tel Aviv, Israel, panelists Sirkka Jarvenpaa, Claudia Loebbecke, David Schwartz, and John Zeleznikow presented their views on the evolution of IS education. With the diversity of the panelists' academic background and the countries/cultures they represent (U.S., Germany, Israel, and Australia), the panelists addressed issues at the national and regional levels, local university level, and disciplinary level. For example, David examined the history of medicine to draw insight for the IS field based on his recent work (Schwartz, 2014).

### **Industry and Practice**

More than half of the time during my working on various IS history-related tasks, I would hear SIM being mentioned as a vital player in the field's establishment and development. I was fortunate to be able to obtain some historical materials in the early days of the IS field and the documents are hosted at the history website. I hope that future efforts are invested on collecting more historical materials about SIM and about its official and unofficial roles in the IS field.

**[AMCIS 2014 Panel—The Historical Development of Industries and Practice's Influence on the IS Field](#)**

At AMCIS 2014 in Savannah, Georgia, a panel with Jerry Luftman, Eph McLean, and Hugh Watson focused on some historical development of industry's and practice's influence on the IS field. Hugh recounted several major events: the IBM MoIS grants in 1985, the formation of the Industry Advisory Board at University of Georgia in 1985, and the University Alliance Programs that involved vendors such as IBM, Microsoft, Oracle, SAP, SAS, and Teradata. Jerry demonstrated that academia and practitioners do not always think differently by providing a comparison between empirically collected industry data with a poll of hands from the audience on a set of questions about the future of IT. Eph recollected the impacts that computing related industry and academe including IS has had on each other since the invention of the first computer in 1942 in Iowa State University. Back in 1985, he predicted that we would thrive as IS departments in universities as long as IS organizations in industry thrive. And his big question now was: are we thriving?



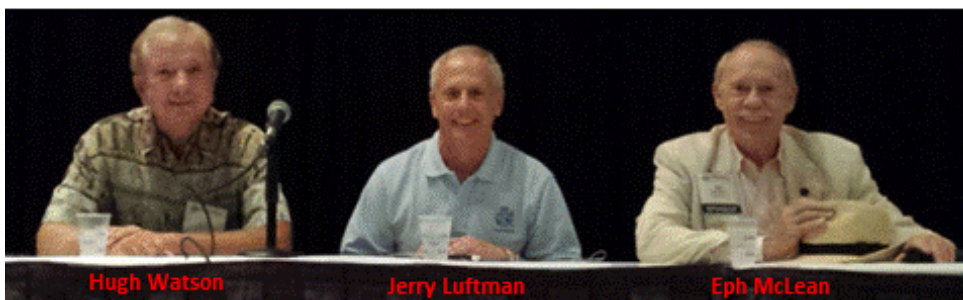
**Panel - IS History:  
The Evolution of IS Education**



**Figure 8. Panelists at ECIS 2014**



**Panel - IS History:  
The Historical Development of Industries' and  
Practice's Influence on the Future of IS**



**Figure 9. Panelists at AMCIS 2014**

**Timelines of the IS Field**

A timeline of a scientific field can depict the milestones, major events, and significant developments occurring in that field in a chronicle fashion. What is interesting is that different people may form different timelines for the same field by considering different things as being historically significant because of their particular perspectives or views. Timelines can be about a specific facet of the field such as its educational programs, conferences, associations,



journals, and so on. Timelines can also be examined from a meta-level lens that goes beyond just the academic field.

#### AMCIS 2013 Panel—Timeline and Institutional Roles of the IS Field

As I mention earlier, at AMCIS 2013 in Chicago, Izak Benbasat, Eph McLean, Rick Watson, and Bob Zmud formed a panel that covered two topics: timelines and institutional roles for the IS field. For the timeline part, Eph gave a historical recount of a timeline of major events that he has lived with in the IS field. Izak recounted the timeline of the IS field from the perspective of its intellectual substance and the continued debates on diversity and identity. Bob examined the timeline of the early IS paper publication outlets and the contexts, and the timeline of the formation of several major IS journals since 1977 when *MISQ* was founded. The earliest IS papers during the mid-50s to mid-70s appeared in journals such as *Management Science*, *Academy of Management Journal*, *Academy of Management Review*, *Communications of the ACM*, *Computing Surveys*, *Decision Sciences*. According to Rick, an information system is a set of entities and shared patterns that enable goal attainment through the processing of information (Watson, 2014). Thus, information systems have existed for millions of years and have been developed by several species, including humans, ants, prairie dogs, and dolphins. In this view, Rick provided a timeline of the IS field related to an economic era of human civilization (Watson et al., 2012), with each of the five eras creating new forms information systems to meet its information processing needs: in the subsistence era are gesture and speech; in the Agricultural era are writing, calendar, mathematics, measures, and money; in the industrial era are accounting, economics, project management, and ERP; in the service era are e-commerce, CRM, and analytics; and in the sustainable era are optimization, simulation, design, and flow analytics.

#### Richard Skinner—A Multimedia Interactive Timeline of the IS Field

Richard Skinner is a PhD candidate at the University of Houston. He initially built the IS field timeline using the Tiki-Toki platform based on teaching materials provided by Dr. Blake Ives and Dr. Dennis Adams at the University of Houston. The original motive was to advance his and other doctoral students' academic study of the IS field. Since the beginning of the IS history initiative, this timeline has been revised and updated constantly to reflect the collective growing understanding of the IS history by the IS community. The timeline provides major influences on the IS field by various dimensions such as institutions, journals, conferences, universities, awards, associations, reference fields, and so on. At the time of this writing, the timeline has more than fifty pointers, starting in 1916 with a pointer to the formation of an association for one of the reference fields, the American Accounting Association, and ending with the pointer to the Senior Scholars' basket of journals created in 2007.

#### Methods for Representing and Writing History in the IS Field

Consultations with colleagues in the history department in my university and a scan of the history field revealed a variety of ways to conduct history research and to write up history materials. To some extent, these approaches and methods may well suit what IS history research and writing would need. It is important to do things right from the beginning.

#### PACIS 2013 Panel—What is IS History and How To Best Represent IS History

At PACIS 2013 in Jeju Island, South Korea, Richard Baskerville, Detmar Straub and Doug Vogel formed a panel that focused on the definitions of IS history, and how to represent, write, and publish IS histories. All three addressed the challenges with publishing IS histories and how to disseminate histories, yet from different angles and perspectives.

#### Paper Preview: The Critical Role of Historiography in Writing IS History (Straub, Forthcoming)

This paper is built on what Detmar presented in his PACIS 2013 panel presentation and what he emphasized at the ICIS 2013 IS history forum. As Detmar puts it, writing history is based on the collection of sufficient raw materials, which further poses the judgment on what should be collected and how much to collect. These judgment calls can be served or guided by historiography, the science that elaborates the variety of methods and procedures that historians use. Detmar further outlines four variations of historiography with examples from the IS field: political history, intellectual history, cultural history, and social history. Although the IS history initiative strategic plan is not strictly arranged by what Detmar outlined, there is considerable overlap on political, intellectual, cultural, and social history. The one variety lacking or weak in the current efforts is the social history, which is indicated with (\*\*) in Table 1, row A2, and Table 2, row "people". I hope the future efforts will fill in those gaps. Overall, the current strategic plan is on solid ground in light of what Detmar suggests. Future efforts can continue to expand the current plan and validate the efforts by the historiography approach outlined in Detmar's paper.



# PACIS 2013

Pacific Asia Conference on Information Systems (PACIS) 2013  
Jeju Island, Korea, June 18-22 2013  
Theme: Smart, Open and Social Information Systems

## Panel - IS History: What It Is & How to Best Represent It



Figure 10. Panelists at PACIS 2013

### V. CONCLUSION

Despite being a relatively young field compared to others, IS has a rich history, and much of it needs to be collected and preserved while the memories are still fresh and available and historically significant artifacts are still accessible. The IS history initiative is to get things started. The current efforts and actions are not meant to be comprehensive or exclusive due to limited resources and time. It is my hope, however, that the strategic plan and some of the existing efforts and results demonstrate a good start with a solid footing. I encourage more people to become involved in the efforts to collect, preserve, write, interpret, and disseminate the IS field's history.

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*Editor's Note:* The following reference list contains hyperlinks to World Wide Web pages. Readers who have the ability to access the Web directly from their word processor or are reading the paper on the Web, can gain direct access to these linked references. Readers are warned, however, that:

1. These links existed as of the date of publication but are not guaranteed to be working thereafter.
2. The contents of Web pages may change over time. Where version information is provided in the References, different versions may not contain the information or the conclusions referenced.
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## APPENDIX A: IBMIS DEVELOPMENT TEAM IN 1985

These photos were taking in the Nanjing Automobile Manufacturer in the summer of 1985 when the development team had the most people in it. All 15 team members in the photos were students. The first photo had also several members from the client organization. The second photo was taking inside the computer room, an air-conditioned room (at that time, Nanjing had no air conditioners in the summer and no heaters in the winter) with all the computer equipment inside (main machine, terminals, printers, etc.). In Figure A-1, I am third from the right on the first (closest) row. In Figure A-2, I am first on the left (front row).



Figure A-1. The Development Team and Some Members from Nanjing Automobile Manufacture



**Figure A-2. The Students Working in the Computer Room**

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Ping Zhang** is professor at Syracuse University. Her research interests include the intellectual development of information related fields; human-centeredness in ICT development, evaluation and use; affective, cognitive, motivational and behavioral aspects of individual reactions towards ICT; and the impact of ICT design and use on individuals, organizations, societies and cultures. Her publications appeared or are appearing in journals such as *MISQ*, *JAIS*, *IEEE ToEM*, *IJEC*, *DSS*, *CAIS*, *AIS THCI*, *IJHCS*, *IJHCI*, *CHB*, *CACM*, *JASIST*, among others, and in many conference proceedings. She authored the inaugural article of the AIS research flagship journal *JAIS*, co-authored the first HCI textbook for non-CS students, and co-edited two books on HCI and MIS of the *Advances in MIS* series. She and Dennis Galletta are founding editors-in-chief of the first AIS transactions journal, *THCI*. In addition, she is a former guest senior editor for *MISQ*, former SE for *JAIS*, former AE for *IJHCS* and *CAIS*, on the editorial board of *JMIS*, and a guest SE of eight special issues of various journals. Dr. Zhang is co-founder and first chair of SIGHCI. She received her PhD in Information Systems from the University of Texas at Austin, and MSc and BSc degrees in Computer Science from Peking University, Beijing, China.

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