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Editors' Comments

Gabriele Piccoli

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From the Editor-in-Chief:

Dear Readers,

Three months ago I wrote my latest editorial; it now feels like it was three years ago. The COVID-19 pandemic has upended our lives with lockdowns, hasty transitions to online courses, Zoom research meetings. As disruptive as these changes have been, let's take solace in the realization that we are the lucky ones. The nature of our work enables us to continue on relying on digital technology to overcome the need for physical distance. The AIS, under the leadership of Blake Ives, Rick Watson and President Alan Dennis created a valuable resource for us to discuss the implications of the pandemic for academics and their institutions: The Association for Information Systems Forum on COVID-19. I encourage you to visit it if you have not done so yet.

Amidst disruption life continues. Hind Benbya, Stella Pachidi, Sirkka Jarvenpaa and Tom Davenport have been working hard on the joint Special Issue of *MIS Quarterly Executive* and the *Journal of the Association for Information Systems* on "Artificial Intelligence in Organizations: Opportunities for Management and Implications for IS Research." I look forward to the accepted papers being published in December 2020. We also announced the December 2021 Special Issue, "Strategies for surviving and thriving within and between digital platforms," with Guest Editors Varun Grover and Kalle Lyytinen. The regional AIS conferences have moved to a virtual format. As I write this, there is still hope that ICIS will be held as planned. If that is the case, look for the Pre-ICIS Academic Workshop associated with the upcoming *MISQE* special issue.

As the old adage goes, you should never let a crisis go to waste. It is evident that digital technology has enabled us to continue on with our work. Sure, the pandemic with its associated crisis is a tragedy and a disruption. A disaster however, that offers yet another reminder of the centrality of digital technology in our current and future lives. To help us think about how *MIS Quarterly Executive*, and its authors, can continue to stay relevant I asked Rick Watson and Blake Ives to help me write an editorial on the subject. Blake and Rick are two of the most accomplished academics in our field, both in terms of academic productivity and in practice-based research. They both held the Research Director position for the SIM Advanced Practices Council, they have published regularly in *MIS Quarterly Executive* and served as guest senior editors for special issues of the journal. Rick and Blake share a rare trait, they are visionaries. They often anticipated trends in our field and, more importantly, moved into action to help the community navigate them. The latest example is the Forum on COVID-19, but there are many others: ISWorld (a website of IS research and teaching resources, which included the ISWorld list, now called AISWorld list), the Global Textbook project, just to name a couple. I encourage you to read the guest editorial, it appears in this issue as a separate contribution.

In this Issue

The current issue has four contributions. The first article, titled "Four Tactics for Implementing a Balanced Digital Platform Strategy," is authored by Kimmo Karhu, Robin Gustafsson, Ben Eaton, Ola Henfridsson and Carsten Sørensen. It identifies four types of tactics for balancing the variety vs. unity and open vs. closed trade-offs that occur in digital platforms. The work explains the tactics and offers four recommendations for a balanced digital platform strategy. These recommendations are directly and most immediately applicable to platform owners but, as the authors argue, they will increasingly apply to traditional firms not previously involved in building digital platforms.

The second article, titled "Data Analytics Contributes to Better Decision-Making Beyond Organizational Boundaries," is authored by Wenyu (Derek) Du, Kang Xie Sun, Shan L. Pan and Jinghua Xiao. It describes the data analytic journey of a garment company. From the case the authors identify nine recommended actions for using data and analytics to orchestrate a networked organization.

The third article, titled "Effective IT Project Leadership," is authored by Mike Taein Eom, Wilfred W. Wu, David S. Preston and Jerry N. Luftman. It contributes a framework for effective project leadership grounded in a classification of project complexity and the recognition of transformational and transactional behaviors essential for leaders. Based on the proposed framework the authors provide three recommendations for matching leadership types with project complexity.

The fourth article, titled "Preparing for the Information Security Threat from Quantum Computers," is authored by Atefeh Mashatan and Ozgur Turetken. It represents the second publication in our *MISQE Research Insights for IT Leaders* section lead by Senior Editor Mary Lacity. These pieces are presented in the form of a conversation, allowing the authors to explore subjects that, because of their technical or quantitative nature, may not fit the standard format of more typical *MIS Quarterly Executive* articles. The current article explores the threat posed by quantum computers for organizations digital security and the privacy of encrypted transmissions. The authors offer guidelines for IT leaders beginning to prepare for these challenges.

Read on!

Gabriele Piccoli
Editor-in-Chief