

## **VOL. 11, NO. 3, July 2008**

### **EDITORIAL PREFACE: TECHNOLOGY IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

Tom Stafford, The University of Memphis, tstaffor@memphis.edu

Guest editor, Tom Stafford introduces the special issue. He observes that the nations that do not enjoy geographical and natural resource advantages are the ones that interest IT researchers, as it is the “have-nots” of the Middle East that find themselves in a position of earning their economic advantage by virtue of superior deployment of economic and organizational resources. Of these, IT is the lever on which many of the regions economies are lifting themselves. The special issue offers perspectives on Jordan, Tunisia, Iran, Israel, and Turkey.

### **ARTICLES:**

#### **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN TRANSITIONAL ECONOMIES: THE MOBILE INTERNET IN JORDAN**

Ahmad Mansour Khasawneh, Hashemite University, Jordan, AKhasawneh@hu.edu.jo

This paper examines mobile Internet adoption and diffusion in the transitional economy of Jordan. The study analyses results from a study of the adoption of mobile Internet in a sample of Jordanian airline customers. Seven factors were found to predict adoption of mobile Internet. Of particular interest was the finding that the variable ‘image’ had an influence in the opposite direction to other studies, which may point to specific cultural factors unique to Jordan. The results provide a sound basis for strategic planning and IS development in Jordan with regard to consumer needs and emerging technologies in a transitional economy.

#### **IMPACT OF SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT AND ERP ON ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE AND COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE: CASE OF TUNISIAN COMPANIES**

Nabil Mzoughi, University of Sousse, Tunisia, teachershelo@yahoo.fr

Nedra Bahri, University of Sousse, Tunisia, bahri.nedra@planet.tn

Mohamed Skander Ghachem, University of Sousse, Tunisia, skanderghachem@yahoo.fr

Supply Chain Management (SCM) and Enterprise Resource Planning systems (ERP) are effective ways to achieve competitive advantage and improve organizational performance. This research investigates SCM and ERP systems dimensions and tests their relationships with competitive advantage and organizational performance. A survey is conducted on 216 Tunisian managers. Data are analyzed using principal components analysis and relationships are tested using linear regression. Results show the importance of SCM and ERP systems adoption. It reveals their positive impact on organizational performance and competitive advantage.

#### **DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND E-LEARNING PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT**

A.A. Safavi, Shiraz University, I.R. Iran, safavi@shirazu.ac.ir

Technological advances offer new paradigms for university training. In particular, multimedia tools have strengthened the distance learning and e-learning approaches. E-Learning is a subset of two large worlds, specifically, “information technology” and “education and training.” Converting a traditional course to e-learning may represent a complex endeavour, and requires accurate planning, monitoring, and control to make the conversion effective and economical. In this paper, an e-learning model and guidelines for developing countries are presented. Then, the case study of the first e-University (or Virtual University) established in Iran is reported.

#### **THE INTERNET IN ISRAEL: 1999-2007 WITH INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS**

Phillip Ein-Dor, Tel-Aviv University, Israel, eindor@tau.ac.il

This article tracks the development of the Internet in Israel over the period 1999-2007. Insofar as possible, those developments are viewed from an international perspective by comparing the data for Israel with those for a nine other countries, some in which the Internet is more highly developed, and some in which it is less so. Elements addressed include: infrastructure – comprising number of Internet hosts, international bandwidth and broadband usage; pervasiveness of the Internet as evidenced by number of Internet users, Internet development indices and the extent of broadband use; finally, the role of the ITC industry is considered.

#### **THE EXPERT OPINION: AN INTERVIEW WITH ALTUĞ ACAR, TURKCELL MOBILE PHONE COMPANY**

Conducted by: Aykut Hamit Turan, Adnan Menderes University, Aykut.turan@gmail.com

Altuğ Acar is the Division Head of New Business Development at Turkcell, the leading mobile operator in Turkey. The interview discusses a number of issues including: mobile telecommunication industry and market in Turkey, company’s European operations, mobile phone usage and diffusion in the future, and the role of mobile Internet.