

EDITORIAL PREFACE

Editor-in-Chief Prashant Palvia discusses the new SCB Global IT Center at the University of Memphis. He describes three primary goals of the Center:

- 1) to provide information and resources to companies in the planning, application, and management of global information technology,
- 2) to conduct and distribute timely and relevant research in global information technology that has practical applications and supports the needs of the business community, and
- 3) to be a primary resource for global information technology education.

ARTICLES

ISO 9000 CERTIFICATION IN THE UK: A STUDY OF THE ROLE PLAYED BY THE INFORMATION SYSTEMS ORGANIZATION

Authors: Elizabeth R. Towell, Kathleen L. McFadden, and Joachim Lauer, Northern Illinois University, Illinois.

Abstract: This study focuses on the role that IS personnel play in the ISO 9000 certification process in the United Kingdom (UK). The authors also compare IS involvement in the UK against that found in United States. ISO 9000 certification, once a European initiative, has evolved into a global quality objective. This study reveals that a great majority of ISO 9000 certification activities are completed without significant IS involvement. Quality managers in the UK identify multiple areas where greater IS involvement is desired. The findings also provide some evidence that involvement of IS personnel may benefit the organization through enhanced communication and greater quality. The implications to ISO 9000 quality managers might well be to consider an expanded role of IS personnel in future certification activities.

EXPECTATIONS AND IMPACTS OF A GLOBAL INFORMATION SYSTEM: THE CASE OF A GLOBAL BANK FROM HONG KONG

Authors: Ken Peppers, Rutgers University, New Jersey, and Virpi Kristiina Tuunainen, Helsinki School of Economics, Finland.

Abstract: IS research suggests that the use of innovative information technology (IT), deployed globally with the right mix of organizational assets, may help firm performance by increasing scale and scope economies, customer value, operational efficiency and organizational effectiveness, and by providing opportunities for competitive advantage. This interpretive case study investigates the business value created by a combination of firm and IT strategy, global assets, and the use of an innovative IS to deliver products in the international trade finance and cash management business. Hexagon, a proprietary on-line banking application that supports the international management of financial assets, was developed by HSBC Holdings, plc. Quantitative and qualitative analysis reveal Hexagon's impacts on HSBC in terms of performance impacts anticipated in the IS literature and in terms of firm level business objectives.

A Framework for IT Industry Development: A Case Study of Pakistan

Author: Syed Zahoor Hassan, Lahore University, Pakistan

Abstract: An integrated framework for understanding IT industry in a developing country is presented and then applied to understand the software industry in Pakistan. Business strategies and management practices of a representative sample of Pakistan's software companies have been studied. It was found that currently a majority of software firms is trying to adopt better marketing strategies and improve their quality assurance systems and project management capabilities as a requirement for focussing on export markets. The key issues faced by software firms are lack of skilled manpower, inefficient infrastructure, unavailability of financing and non-protection of intellectual rights. Measures taken by the Government, software industry association and recent developments that have led to more than 30% growth rate of the IT industry in Pakistan, are also presented. The proposed framework is utilised to formulate some recommendations for further development of the IT industry.

THE EXPERT'S OPINION

AN INTERVIEW WITH MR. M.V. THOMAS, DIRECTOR, SOFTWARE AND SIGNALING ENGINEERING CORPORATE DIVISION, POWERTEL, INC., WEST POINT, GA,

Interview conducted by Chetan S. Sankar and Anthony P. Santella, Auburn University. Powertel, Inc. provides wireless personal communications services ("PCS") in the southeastern United States and provides cellular telephone service in contiguous portions of western Georgia and eastern Alabama. This interview discusses Powertel's strategies for entering into the U.S. markets, their state-of-the-art technologies, the introduction of European technologies into the U.S., and the role of government in promoting IT initiatives.

THE BOOK REVIEW

THE BOOK REVIEW: Written by Edward M. Roche.

He reviews "Leveraging the New Infrastructure: How Market Leaders Capitalize on Information Technology" by Peter Weill and Marianne Broadbent, Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1998.

This is an ambitious book, presenting a combination of empirical research and consulting-oriented frameworks. Broadbent and Weill have made an extensive IBM Consulting Group-funded study of 27 companies, located in North American, Europe and the Asia Pacific Region. They present survey information on IT budgets as well as on a variety of attitudinal and assessment factors.

