Editorial (Archive)

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It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the first digital, Web-based journal of this kind. The uniqueness of this journal is to be found in its core features, for example:

It is

- the only peer-reviewed, electronic South African journal concentrating on publishing articles in the specialised field of Information Management
- being published by an academic department on a non-profit basis
- gratis, that is, 'subscribers' are invited to join the free circulation list of the Journal
- designed in such a way that its subscribers will receive an e-mail notification whenever any of the articles or columns have been updated
- not a mere electronic version of a paper-based journal, but an original product, designed to incorporate the unique features of a multimedia product
- a scholarly journal aimed at international readers.

We feel that the *South African Journal of Information Management* (*SAJIM*) can fulfil a niche and is capable of bringing together all the different disciplines active in this environment, for example, business management, informatics, computer science and information science. New topics are continuously being identified and explored in this new multidisciplinary arena, a characteristic that can be accommodated exceptionally well in such a multimedia, Web-based publishing environment. This has been the *guiding light* in the design of the look-and-feel of the *SAJIM*.

First and foremost, the peer-reviewed section of the Journal represents exactly what it says: Especially in the beginning stages while the journal is still unknown, authors are invited to write contributions on relevant topics. Manuscripts are then scrutinised for quality according to normal international review standards. Articles are published on a quarterly basis, that is June, September, December and January.

In contrast, other less formal elements have been introduced into the Journal, such as a number of 'irregular' columns, as well as a section for 'student work'. Column editors could add or update their respective contributions whenever they deem it necessary – every update will be announced on the entrance page to the Journal. The section for student work was specifically brought in as a prominent feature of the Journal, as often valuable research work done as part of advanced undergraduate or post-graduate research reports is lost. These reports are edited and re-formatted for publication, but not peer-reviewed in the normal sense of the word.

The Editor is currently in the process of selecting an editorial board from the international community. One of the Board's first assignments will be to assist in the further development or improvement of the Journal. Interested scholars and/or practitioners can contact the Editor if they feel they can contribute in developing the Journal.

This first issue emphasises two prominent issues of the day: *Content* (information) and *knowledge*. Able and White's article explains a practical approach on how to integrate content into an organisation's Intranet. Intranets currently deployed do not provide their end-users with an effective balance of internally generated information and external information (that is, about the external environment, as well as data and information being made available by commercial database vendors). Information auditing is described as a methodology in establishing the content of an Intranet.

The article by Newman, in contrast, explores the term *knowledge* and locates it within a hierarchy of meaning that includes data, information and technology. Newman's well-motivated ideas clearly illustrate a new approach to extend the concept of knowledge, namely to knowledge development.

The other two articles work in tandem to convey fresh ideas of establishing the relative value of

information. Coelho's article investigates the role of information in the value chain of enterprises in the new economy of the Information Age, as well as the impact of information on the value chain or value-creation process as measured in terms of cost-savings, faster turnaround times, better customer service, or any other factor that contributes to an enterprise's competitive advantage. Smallman indicates in his article how the pricing of information products is a central issue within the information economy paradigm. This is an extremely important contribution towards developing a framework for the pricing of the information products of corporate information centres. An example of such a framework is proposed in the article, based upon the unique economic characteristics of these information products.

It is very apt that in the news column reference is being made to an inaugural speech that recently addressed the necessity of implementing knowledge management theory and practice in the tertiary environment. As a bonus, the Web sitings column set the ball rolling by discussing a selected few Web environments that address knowledge management theory and practice.

Readers are invited to e-mail the editor with any suggestions for improving the Journal, as well as contributions in the form of articles, news or column contributions.

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