

## Welcome to the Fourth Edition of iSCHANNEL!

iSCHANNEL serves a number of purposes each year. While an excellent tool for teaching students the rigors of managing an academic journal, another purpose is to provide an overview of the types of research and work that students in ISIG focus on during their time here. This is an area that we have tried to focus on this year. In past years, iSCHANNEL's publishing deadlines effectively mandated that the majority of submissions came from the fall project, dominantly literature reviews. This year, through a combination of factors, we have broadened our scope to include some of the spring projects. Spring projects are generally guided by student's interests and their particular course selections, allowing for a great deal of variety due to different combinations of student and professor preferences. They can also include original research, something Will touched upon in his editorial. As such, including them provides a greater perspective of the myriad different perspectives LSE and ISIG impart upon its students.

In his editorial, Will talked about the future role of the journal. I strongly encourage the concept of allowing prior year dissertations—perhaps a limited selection. While this would be extremely challenging due to the academic cycle and the departure of ISIG students during and after summer term, providing a venue for student research publication would be a very rewarding endeavour for all parties involved—if it is indeed an achievable goal.

In this volume we have a selection of original student pieces. Not only do we have papers inspired by four different courses from the Analysis, Design, and Management of Information Systems (ADMIS) group, we have a paper from a student in the Information Systems and Organizations (Research) (ISOR) group, broadening the scope even more. Unfortunately, by focusing on breadth instead of depth, we cannot explore any single subject in great detail. Instead, this journal admirably serves its goal of showcasing the work of ISIG as a whole.

The first paper, **The Überlingen Mid-Air Collision: A Tragedy—Revisited**, is notable most importantly for its approach to a non-traditional information system—that of two airplanes involved in a tragic crash due to mismatches in information and conflicting systems, despite all controls in place to prevent the crash. Through his analysis and application of theory, Branstner shows how broad of a scope the group takes when it refers to an 'Information System.' In addition, he links that to a recently published theory from Lars Mathiassen and Carsten Sorensen, one that we are introduced to during the course of our studies in the department, applying theory to real-life situations.

Moving on, **Reconsidering the Digital Divide** is one of the clearest papers that I have read this year. In the course of reviewing literature on the oft-mentioned digital divide, Benhabrim simultaneously identifies a gap in the literature that analyzes the digital divide, and calls for more exploration of the socio-economic systems in developing countries as they relate to ICT, and area he has found to be sorely lacking.

Next, Zhan presents a concise overview of perspectives on the development of artificial systems. In **Challenging the Intelligence of Systems**, he presents four different perspectives on systems and emergent processes, using them to show how they massively increase the complexity of any attempt to create an artificial intelligence. While merely an introduction to applying these theories, the framework he presents shows how many challenges there are in any system designed to approximate, even roughly, human activity.

When asking **Is the world agile?**, Knosalla identifies a series of questions pertaining to the general category of development methodologies categorized as 'agile.' Taking us through the arguments for and against agile methods, Knosalla identifies a trend towards polarization. While a good overview of the world of agile methodologies in academic circles, the most contributory aspect of the paper is its conclusion, that there is likely a need for a more balanced view in practitioners—they need the ability to pick and choose what fits from old and new circles as best fits the situation at hand.

From the ISOR group, Oymen Gur presents an academic exploration of Foucaultian methodology as applied to social networking sites. In **An Alternative Approach to Research in ICT**, Gur demonstrates the application of genealogical techniques to very recent innovations in technology. This is particularly significant as it is arguably more common to hear Foucault invoked when referring to power dynamics instead of his teachings of genealogy.

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Next up, Gabe Chomic presents a historical account of emergent change literature over time, detailing the academic development of the theories of situated and emergent change. Taking a longitudinal approach, **Change Over Time** traces similarities and dissimilarities in the literature, concluding that change theories are at risk of becoming too complex and difficult to apply. This, too, raises the question of where emergent change approaches are going, and what situations they can be applied to and still be useful.

In another piece from a Lent term course, Knosalla provides an overview of the conflicts created between banking law and privacy concerns in **Tax Havens, Evasion, and Banking Secrecy**. Instead of focusing on exploring a particular theory, she examines recent developments in the international financial environment and how they relate to taxation, finding a situation where there is a lot of debate and political discourse, with less opportunity for reasoned action and a strong risk of losing financial privacy.

Finally, the last piece, **Bits & Bytes of Happiness**, is a short opinion piece designed to provoke thought about happiness in internet users. While intentionally short, the studies it references point to a trend for happiness in internet users until a sharp dichotomy, and provoke thought about happiness in today's culture.

Running the iCHANNEL editorial team this year has been a quite a challenge, but also quite rewarding. Future editorial teams should definitely consider the suggestions made by Leslie and Will, and expand this journal's scope if possible. However, even if just maintaining the status quo, the next teams need to focus on motivation. There is a lot that needs to be done to keep the journal running, but even more to ensure quality submissions and a balanced viewpoint. For next year's editorial team, wherever you bring the journal, jump into it!

Gabe Chomic  
Lead Editor, iCHANNEL 2009