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We have experienced recent weather that we would soon like to forget. Could this be due to global warming? The airline industry has suffered because bad weather has caused major problems for airports with numerous flight delays and cancellations. For example, Denver was shutdown for a few days and JetBlue suffered an embarrassment when its passengers were forced to stay for several hours on board the plane sitting on the runway. These are decision problems that we can all learn from. Hopefully, the worst weather is behind us and the articles in this issue of *Decision Line* will enlighten you.

Mark Davis, Bentley College, appears upbeat as he winds down his responsibility as president of the Decision Sciences Institute. He outlines several areas that the Board has focused on that would move the Institute forward and provide value to its members. These include the formation of the Indian Subcontinent Region, development of a brand new DSI annual meeting website, and sponsorship of a stand alone miniconference.

The first feature article is from Joanne Tucker and Victor Massad of Shippensburg University, one of the finalists of the 2006 Instructional Innovative Award Competition. They present "A Hands-On Approach to Learning Business Processes" that integrates the various functional areas of business and provides students with the experience of running a business. The students are divided into small groups and are responsible for managing their own eBay business. The course enables students to learn how to make business decisions, think critically, and hone their leadership skills.

The Production/Operations Management column by Vijay Kannan, J. Brian Atwater, and Alan Stephens of Utah State University suggests that firms were unsuccessful in their strategic initiatives because they failed to use a sys-

temic approach to problem solving. They present insights into systems thinking and the challenges of making systems thinking an integral part of graduate management education.

"In the Classroom" features an article by Rick Hesse of Pepperdine University, who provides an Excel-based template for simulating the height and weight of 200 male students to determine how many would be able to fit inside a solar-powered vehicle developed by the Mercer Engineering School for the Sunrayce solar car competition. This Excel-based simulation exercise also reinforces the student's understanding of simple linear regression.

Next, Kenneth Kendall, Rutgers University, and Allen Schmidt, Madison Area Technical College, discuss "mashups," a new trend in e-commerce. Mashup, a term borrowed from the pop music industry, describes a new offering resulting from combining and mixing the content of unrelated, even competing websites. Both consumer-oriented and fun websites showing mashup applications are provided by the authors. It is anticipated that mashups will grow quickly and seriously alter the way content is presented on the Internet.

Sarah Bryant Bower of Shippensburg University laments in "The Deans' Perspective" about the lack of guidance and direction for new deans. She provides several valuable lessons that can enhance and accelerate the new dean's adjustment to the job. Her final advice to new deans is "to remember that deaning is a tough job, with few thank you's." Hopefully, these lessons will provide guidance for new deans and help lengthen their job tenure.

In the "From the Bookshelf" column, Professor Terry Harrison, Pennsylvania State University, reviews three supply chain management books. He concludes that the *Principles of Supply*

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Upper West Side neighborhood of Seinfeld. The visitor can actually see the location of the infamous "Soup Nazi."

These two mashups use the API provided from Google Maps and combine it with specific data about the respective television shows.

Consumer Oriented Mashup Applications

There are many practical mashups. For example, the Web site:

[Aboutairportparking.com](http://www.aboutairportparking.com), <http://www.aboutairportparking.com>

can help you find a reasonably priced parking space at an airport. It uses an API for Google maps and information from airports, airlines, and parking facilities.

The following three sites help a customer find better prices on Internet shopping. Hawkee Social Price Comparison,

<http://www.hawkee.com/>

combines APIs from Amazon, eBay, and Commission Junction to allow customers to review products (and be reviewed themselves by other customers).

A site called mpire,

<http://www.mpire.com/buyer/search.page>

helps customers determine the appropriate market price.

Finally, Baebo,

<http://baebo.francisshanahan.com/>

uses at least eleven APIs and delivers messages via RSS to a customer's BlackBerry or other handheld.

There are many real estate sites useful in buying or selling a house. For example, Bogozo,

<http://www.bogozo.com/house/?new+york>

which overlays a New York subway map onto Google Maps and Craigslist data so that potential buyers can see how to get to work.

Another real estate mashup is Homethinking,

<http://www.homethinking.com/>

which helps a buyer or seller find a real estate agent based on data that shows the sales performance of area agents.

Mashups – Just for Fun

There are more sites that you may appreciate just for fun. If you want to know what would happen if you dug a hole in your back yard deep enough to get to the other side of the earth, look at Dig to the Other Side,

<http://map.pequenopolis.com/>

If you want to tell a story, look at the randomly generated stories created by PlotShot,

<http://www.plotshot.com/>

This mashup uses pictures from Flickr to generate a "Mad Libs" type story. Another good mashup based on Flickr is Flickr Sudoku,

<http://flickrsudoku.com/>

Why play a boring Sudoku game with just plain Arial style numbers when you can get randomly generated Flickr photos showing brightly colored photos of numbers from 1 to 9?

Finally if, you think your Google search engine looks boring, just go to Ms. Dewey,

<http://www.msdewey.com/>

This site used a search engine API and combines it with customized video from a quasi-professional actor, named Ms. Dewey. It sometimes appears that Ms. Dewey is just there to annoy you when you don't ask a question. We're not really sure the site is useful, other than to get a few laughs. But who says that using mashups can't be fun?

Mashups and the Future of DSI

We look forward to the day that someone uses an API from the DSI Annual Meeting and combines it with a list of people we need to see there, then delivers the resulting schedule to our Palm Treo or mobile phone. We can dream for now, but maybe someday it will be a reality.

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Chain Management—A Balanced Approach book by Joel D. Wisner, G. Keong Leong, and Keah-Choon Tan (Thomson/South-Western, 2005) is a "strong undergraduate text," the *Supply Chain Management—Strategy, Planning and Operation* book by Sunil Chopra and Peter Meindl (Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2007) is "becoming a classic MBA text," and the *Strategic Supply Chain Management* book by Shoshanah Cohen and Joseph Roussel (McGraw-Hill, 2005) is "focused on the supply chain professional."

Enjoy! ■