

DECISION LINE

Vol. 38, No. 3

May 2007



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Beginning a New Era

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A recent cartoon in *The New Yorker* shows a junior executive discussing his job with his boss. The caption states, "I'll be happy to give you innovative thinking. What are the guidelines?" As humor, it also appeals to academics because readers can picture themselves either as the dean who demands innovative thinking from junior faculty or as a junior faculty member who doesn't want to necessarily take the risks associated with originality.

Our DSI family is similar in many ways. We'll need both guidelines and innovation to survive and prosper now and in the future. In my past role as program chair for the 2004 Annual Meeting in Boston, I shared new guidelines and values with my track chairs. I encouraged them, however, to form sessions in the way they thought best. The credit for this successful meeting belongs to my track chairs: they filled the meeting hotel with sessions that were innovative, original, and even inspired. They increased the meeting's attendance by 22 percent and made the program a memorable one.

Adopting Core Values for Developing New Programs

In my new role as president, I'm asking each board member and committee chair to help with our renewal by adopting additional core values (borrowed from agile modeling, one of my current research areas) as they develop new initiatives and programs for DSI. These core values are: courage, communication, simplicity, and feedback.

Courage. We all recognize that it takes courage to suggest imaginative changes for a 37-year-old organization. In the next few years we will face competition from other professional associations, uncertain economic conditions, and a membership that may not grow unless we introduce novel and original services for our members. We'll need to take bold steps to assure that the conference information system is both stable and flawless.

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Communication. It will be crucial to communicate because we will need to be more agile as an organization. We'll need to be responsive to new trends in research and encourage innovative state-of-the-art research topics, both theoretical and applied. Our Web site needs to be more effective at communicating about national, international, and regional meetings, perhaps through RSS feeds and other push technologies.

Simplicity. Through simplicity, we will be able to innovate more rapidly. Our solutions need to be straightforward and without bias. We do not need overly elaborate solutions if a less intricate one is more practical, works more quickly, and is comprehensible to many members rather than just a handful of people. Simplicity can extend to our adoption of bylaws, policies and procedures that are clear in their language and meaning, and even to improving the ease of use of the DSI Web site.

Feedback. Finally, accepting and responding to feedback in a transparent way is an admirable value, and I intend to encourage more feedback from members and others with whom the Institute collaborates. Those who recently participated in our doctoral consortium or who are currently working in their first academic position must advise senior members of DSI about how we can become enablers in their careers. We will improve only if our members provide us with honest appraisals of how we are doing and how we can change.

Goals for the Upcoming Year

This is the beginning of a new era. We are trying something different this year. In late August the DSI Board of Directors will be having a special retreat to reflect on the Institute and revitalize the partnership between the board and the home office, as well as to reinvigorate the relationship between DSI, its members, and the regions.

I want to thank our Immediate Past President, Mark Davis, who began the process of change. I also want to thank the outgoing members of the board who

gave freely of their time, insights, and energy to improve the Institute. They set an admirable example for all members who seek to serve the Institute in a larger capacity.

One pleasant surprise that arose from the April Board of Directors meeting was the overwhelmingly enthusiastic support from the board members and their desire to devote additional time to examining strategic issues regarding the Institute.

While our overarching goal is to renew and revitalize the Institute, our immediate objectives are to develop new ways to:

1. Engage and communicate with our membership
2. Increase attendance and quality of the annual meeting
3. Enhance journal quality and promote research excellence
4. Clarify the DSI structure and relationships between the board, the home office, and members
5. Grow our membership
6. Expand our global position and perspective.

During the course of the year, you will be asked for suggestions and also for your opinion on the alternatives that evolve, but you may write to me at any time.

A Time for Renewal

As DSI members, we are all part of a multifaceted family. Within our family, networking with colleagues is meant to be both meaningful and enjoyable; we strive to hold affordable meetings that provide ample ground for intellectual exchange; we continue to publish two scholarly journals of outstanding quality; and we endeavor to cultivate a brand name that is becoming recognized around the world.

This coming year will be a time for renewal of the DSI we've come to know and love. I look forward to working with all of you in the DSI family over the term of my presidency. ■

DSJ TOPIC FORUM, from page 21

- Taxonomies of service innovation decisions
- B2B service innovation collaborative decision models
- New service development models and decision making phases
- Models for customer and supplier involvement in the service-innovation decision making process.
- New goods vs. new service innovation and service innovation within the manufacturing context
- Decision support tools and techniques for assessing service innovation
- Tradeoffs and tensions within and between functional areas related to new service innovation
- Decision making related to upstream and downstream service innovation.

All submissions must adhere to the format and style guidelines of the *Decision Sciences Journal*. Manuscripts will be evaluated on the same criteria as regular manuscripts, except greater emphasis will be placed on the transdisciplinary impact of the research. The evaluation process will be similar to regular paper submissions, except the associate editors assigned to the manuscript will be part of the STF Editorial Team.

Manuscript preparation and submission instructions can be found on journal's web site at

https://wpcarey.asu.edu/DSJOnline/Help/Author/author_Guidelines.cfm

In the cover letter, please indicate that your submission is for the Services Special Topic Forum regarding Advancing Decision Making in Service Innovation.

Submission Period: Manuscripts for this special topics forum may be submitted between August 1st and October 31st 2007. Early submission is encouraged, but not prior to the starting date of August 1.

References available upon request. ■