

The two candidates for the elected position of DSI president-elect—**G. Keong Leong of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and David Olson of the University of Nebraska, Lincoln**—provide their visions of the Institute.



**G. Keong Leong**

My vision for the Institute is that of enhanced value to its members. To achieve this vision, the Institute has to increase its reputation through international engagement, improved quality of its research publications and annual meetings, and use of technology.

Our Institute’s non-U.S. membership has varied between 12 and 18 percent of the total membership (see Table 1). The Academy of Management has more than 30 percent of its members from outside the U.S. Attendance at our Institute’s annual meetings over the last four years has ranged from 1,190 in 2005 to 1,439 in 2004, with the all time record of 1,780 set in San Diego in 1990. Nevertheless, non-U.S. participants at the annual meetings have generally accounted for only about 7 percent of total attendance. For future growth, our annual meetings must continue to attract more international participation.

The U.S. offers a mature market. Other academic organizations, including AACSB, have had to deal with this very challenge. Our Institute started the Asia-Pacific chapter in 1994, the Mexico chapter in 2004, and the Indian Sub-continent chapter in 2006. While these represent steps in the right direction, these chapters were not formed as an outcome of a coherent strategic plan.

The Institute needs a strategic plan for its international expansion. The European Union has a large academic base of potential members for our Institute. Setting up a regional chapter in Europe should be a strategic priority for us. Hopefully, the upcoming international meeting in France will provide the impetus to start a European chapter.

The internationalization of our Institute can begin right here in the U.S. A number of non-U.S. students attend doctoral programs in the U.S. While many stay back to work and live in the U.S, many others return to careers in their home countries. Foreign students who have associated with the Institute while in the U.S. will likely continue their association on return to their respective countries. The Asia Pacific regional chapter has been successful to a large extent because of U.S.-educated members promoting the chapter to their colleagues. We should make every effort to invite and welcome doctoral students to the Institute. Many doctoral students have already found a friendly, familiar, and affordable environment for engagement and networking at our various regional meetings. Regional chapters of the Institute could serve as a very important role in cultivating future members.

Indeed, historically the Institute has not capitalized on the potential contribution of the regional chapters. Their role is not made explicit in the Institute’s

Constitution and Bylaws. In fact, with regional chapters now extending outside the U.S., they can play a crucial role in spreading the name of the Institute globally and providing enhanced value to its members. Regional networks can increase participation at the Institute’s annual meetings and vice-versa. For instance, going beyond soliciting regional award-winning authors to participate in the Institute’s annual meeting, we could offer them complimentary registrations as well. Also, to enhance the integration of the regional chapters, the Conference Information System used by the Institute could be extended to the regional chapters. The regional chapters need such support.

Emerging technologies offer excellent opportunities, as well. The Institute has already redesigned its website to promote its corporate identity and brand. This design should be extended to the regional chapters to create a consistent brand image. The Internet is an excellent marketing tool to reach prospective members worldwide at minimal cost. An analysis of the Institute’s website indicates that currently our members use it mainly for placement information (72,850 views), annual meeting information (29,090 views), and paper submissions to conferences (23,468 views). We would do well to improve our website to address the global audience and their interests in these areas and others as well.

Year	Total Members	Non-US Members (%)	Conference Location	Conference Attendees	International Attendees (%)
2008	1,936	341 (17.6%)	Baltimore		
2007	2,070	337 (16.3%)	Phoenix	1221	79 (6.5%)
2006	2,170	397 (18.3%)	San Antonio	1287	99 (7.7%)
2005	2,260	280 (12.4%)	San Francisco	1190	85 (7.1%)
2004	2,206	323 (14.6%)	Boston	1439	59 (4.1%)

*Table 1: The Institute membership and conference participation (data provided by the Institute’s Home Office).*

We should also remain ever alert to emerging decision science disciplines that remain under served. Supply Chain Management is one such discipline. Our Institute should take the lead in further developing this area through innovative research of topics such as sustainable development and supplier ethics management, a dedicated journal, and other forums. In areas where we are already strong, we can gain greater heights. For instance, we could expand the reach of our highly regarded flagship publication, *Decision Sciences*, to practitioners and researchers by showcasing selected articles on the Internet using podcasts. Podcasts allows members and non-members to easily access information of interest to them. In addition, selected articles from *Decision Line* and *Decision Sciences Journal of Innovative Education* and presentations by the best paper award winners and instructional innovation award competition finalists at the annual meetings could be podcasted and made available on the Institute's website. Podcast links could be sent to leading business publications and deans of business schools worldwide to alert them of information that might be relevant to them. This could lead to increased interest in the Institute and result in new members. Podcasts can be an important medium for disseminating cutting edge research, augmenting our traditional channels. The publicity gained through these podcasts could increase the citation of research published by the Institute and impact factor of its journals, enhancing the Institute's reputation and stature.

I wish to thank the Institute for giving me the opportunity to run for the prestigious position of president-elect. Having served in many leadership capacities for the Institute, I feel confident that with your support, we can collectively enhance the international reputation of the Institute and membership value.

*Keong Leong is professor and chair of the Management Department, College of Business, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.*  
**keong.leong@unlv.edu**



### David L. Olson

In my opinion the Decision Sciences Institute is one of the more inclusive organizations in academia. We have provided a structure for diverse activities across all sub-disciplines within business. We have outlets for cutting edge research in *Decision Sciences*, as well as a leading pedagogical research journal in *Decision Sciences Journal of Innovative Education*. I have had the honor of participating in innovative education competitions and paper presentation tracks. The Institute has long provided similar venues for case studies. There have been special programs at the annual meeting for degree programs (I organized the first Ph.D. program of this type at the suggestion of Lori Franz, who organized an MBA program the year before). There have been other special programs for focus areas such as service operations, one of which was presented in 1996 when I chaired the annual meeting.

Regions have always been a key part of the Institute. This is a crucial service provided to many members. While the schools I have been with have emphasized the annual meeting, and there are so many Institute activities that one cannot attend them all, I have participated in a limited way in regional meetings as a presenter or coauthor of papers. This does not diminish in my mind the importance of regions to the Institute. They are a fundamental element in the organization's future success, because they serve as incubators for future members and leaders of the organization.

I was an early supporter of the Institute offering international programs. The international meetings offered by the organization offer a means to globalize the Institute. The decisions of the 1990s that have led to a series of international meetings as well as the formation of international regions should prove to be highly beneficial to the organization's ongoing success.

My philosophy is that we should continue to mutually support programs

that expand the value offered by the Institute—in forms of research outlets of high quality, in forms of special programs, in forms of regional participation, and a growing international presence. There are many competitive organizations, a number of which I belong to. With responsibilities in MIS, the Decision Sciences Institute faces attractive alternatives in ICIS and AMCIS that have drawn some of my energy. In operations management, similar alternatives have grown in the form of POMS and OMA. Quantitative work has always had an alternative in INFORMS and its predecessors. There are strong organizations for all of the other functional areas of business studies. The Institute historically marketed the position that it was the second choice for all areas. DSI's strategy has also been to be the first choice for interdisciplinary activities. That is a tough sell during periods of budget contraction. But we have survived through some tough times, and I think that this is still a viable strategy. We cannot be everything to everyone, but I think that it would be a mistake to focus on any one aspect of the programs our organization has offered.

I have served on the board in the role of at-large vice president six years. In all that time, the Institute has had a very healthy financial profile. I understand that last year was not as successful. Much of that is determined by the attendance at the annual meeting. I don't know the particulars with respect to the past shortfall. My philosophy is to of course return to fiscal solvency on an annual basis, while at the same time seeking to avoid increases in the dues structure as much as possible. But the first priority is to attain at least a break-even posture every year.

It is my view that the Decision Sciences Institute has succeeded in obtaining membership by offering many opportunities to participate. We have many committees, each with what I consider to be many members. I have served on quite a few of these committees, and have always been impressed with the openness in which they have been conducted, offering all an opportunity to

influence what the Institute does. I think this is a real strength of the organization, leading to greater participation and commitment on the part of our members, which is crucial to our survival (which in turn directly impacts fiscal solvency).

My vision of the organization is that we continue to offer the diverse services that we have in the past. DSI attained a preeminent reputation for its job placement services. I believe this should continue to be a strength. I know that in the area of MIS, the industry has experienced some retraction, with quite a few more applicants than positions. However, we should continue to support those areas where we have had success in the past. We also should continue the participative committee structure which enables continued success.

As to job qualifications, I have been a steady participant in Institute activities for over two decades. I served on the Membership Committee from 1984-1986, and on the Innovative Education Committee in 1986-1988. I served as the Innovative Education Committee chair in 1987-1988, and as track chair in a number of annual meetings, most in the area of Decision Support Systems. I served on the Doctoral Affairs Committee 1989-1991 and 1994-1996, the last year as chair and as coordinator of the first Ph.D. Curricular Issues Program. I have been elected as an at-large vice president in 1989, 1994, and 2003, and served a total of six years on the board. The most taxing assignment I have had was as chair of the annual meeting in San Diego in 1997.

I have participated nearly every year since 1980 in the form of research papers presented at meetings, some winning awards. I was honored to be named a fellow of the Institute in 1998. I have also participated heavily as a session chair, presenter, and discussant at the annual meeting.

The six years on the board exposed me to a variety of views, and an understanding of how the organization operates. Carol Latta has documented the many diverse functions of the Institute in a very thorough manner. But each of those six boards had their own personal-

ity. I have seen some diverse managerial styles, all with some merit. If elected, my promise is that I would do my utmost to maximize participation of members, to provide the maximum value to our membership, and to support as many diverse programs of merit as possible, through strong regional relevance and global presence. ■

*David Olson is the James & H.K. Stuart Chancellor's Distinguished Chair in the College of Business Administration, University of Nebraska, Lincoln.*  
dolson3@unl.edu

#### **NOMINATIONS**, from page 1

The 2007-08 Nominating Committee, chaired by Mark M. Davis (Bentley College), has completed the slate of nominees for the 2009 election of officers. The Nominating Committees for the regional subdivisions also are compiling the names of nominees who are running this year for the office of vice presidents elected by the regional subdivisions.

Ballots will be sent in January 2009. Additional nominations may be made by November 30, 2008. Each additional nomination must be made by petition signed by at least five percent of the members and submitted to the Institute's Secretary, c/o the Institute's Home Office, 35 Broad Street, Atlanta, GA 30303.

Additional nominations for vice presidents elected by the regional subdivisions may be made upon petition signed by at least five percent of the regional subdivisions' members.

Please be sure that the DSI Home Office has your current email address!

## **Submitting articles to Decision Line**

Members are invited to submit essays of about 2,000 to 2,500 words in length on topics of their interest, especially articles of concern to a broad, global audience. Please send essays (including brief bio and photo) to either the respective feature editor or to Editor Krishna Dhir.

*Deans' Perspective & Editor*  
Krishna S. Dhir, Berry College  
kdhir@berry.edu

*Doctoral Student Affairs*  
Xenophon Koufteros, Texas A&M University  
xkoufteros@mays.tamu.edu

*E-Commerce*  
Kenneth Kendall, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey  
ken@thekendalls.org

*From the Bookshelf*  
Peter Ittig, University of Massachusetts, Boston  
Peter.Ittig@umb.edu

*In the Classroom*  
Bih-Ru Lea, Missouri University of Science and Technology  
leabi@mst.edu

*Information Technology Issues*  
Vijayan Sugumaran, Oakland University  
sugumara@oakland.edu

*In the News*  
Carol Latta, Decision Sciences Institute  
clatta@gisu.edu

*International Issues*  
John Davies, Victoria University in Wellington, New Zealand  
john.davies@vuw.ac.nz

*Membership Roundtable*  
Robert L. Andrews, Virginia Commonwealth University  
rlandrew@vcu.edu

*Production/Operations Management*  
Daniel A. Samson, University of Melbourne, Australia  
d.samson@unimelb.edu.au

*Research Issues*  
Miles Nicholls, RMIT University, Australia  
miles.nicholls@rmit.edu.au