

# DECISION LINE

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## Congratulations to Newly Elected DSI Officers



**President-Elect**  
G. Keong Leong, University of Nevada-Las Vegas (see photo)

**Secretary**  
Janet L. Hartley, Bowling Green State University

**At-Large Vice-Presidents**  
Kenneth K. Boyer, The Ohio State University  
Jatinder (Jeet) N.D. Gupta, The University of Alabama-Huntsville  
Richard Jenson, Utah State University  
Susan E. Pariseau, Merrimack College

**Indian Subcontinent Regionally-Elected Vice President**  
Bidya Sahay, Institute of Management Technology

**Southeast Regionally-Elected Vice President**  
Brooke Saladin, Wake Forest University

**Southwest Regionally-Elected Vice President**  
Thomas W. Jones, University of Arkansas-Fayetteville

**Western Regionally-Elected Vice President**  
Vijay R. Kannan, Utah State University

The ballot tabulation was audited and verified by DATAMATX, Inc., Atlanta, GA. See page 34 for more information.

### PRESIDENT'S LETTER



## Recognizing the Accomplishments of the 2008-09 DSI Board

This has been an eventful year in the global community. From where I sat in China, it was a first-hand observation of the earthquake in Sichuan Province, then the Beijing Olympics, but continually, the massive industrial and infrastructural developments in this country. Especially when it came to projects led by the government, there was a clear evidence of operations

See **PRESIDENT'S LETTER**, page 35

### Inside This Issue

#### FEATURES

**From the Editor.** *Decision Line* Editor Krishna S. Dhir provides an overview of 40(2) feature articles. **3**

**Feature Interview.** A Conversation with... Charles Pius Bonini," by Wen-Bin 'Vincent' Yu, Missouri University of Science and Technology. **4**

**International Issues.** "Internationalization? You Gotta Be Serious!", by Linda Brennan, Swinburne University of Technology, Hawthorn, Victoria, Australia. **6**

**Research Issues.** "Theory of Constraints," by John Davies and Vicky Mabin, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. **9**

**Ecommerce.** "Why Is Wikipedia Not More Widely Accepted in Korea and China? Factors Affecting Knowledge-Sharing Adoption," by J. P. Shim, Mississippi State University; and Jeongwon Yang, Kyungpook National University and Mississippi State University. **12**

**Deans' Perspective.** "Making Ethical Decisions," by Joseph Gilbert, University of Nevada Las Vegas. **16**

**From the Bookshelf.** "Investment Decisions," by Peter T. Ittig, PhD. **19**

#### SPECIAL REPORTS

**Regions' Update** **21**

**Announcing New DSI Journal** **24**

**2009 Program Chair's Message** **26**

**New Faculty Development Consortium** **30**

**2009-2010 Newly Elected Officers** **34**

**Accomplishments of the 2008 Board** **35**

**2009 International Meeting** **37**

#### DEPARTMENTS

**Announcements** **25**

**Officer & Fellow Nominations** **39**

planning and, where necessary, quick execution of disaster recovery. In the U.S., the presidential election was a diversion from the rising economic problems, credit crunch, and yet a continuing (and fiscally debilitating) involvement in Iraq. No matter what their political affiliations are, people throughout the world look to the U.S. to change the course of the economic situation, hoping that sound decisions will be made very soon to redress the situation.

As academics in the decision sciences, I have urged through my messages in *Decision Line* that our research, publication, teaching, and consulting be supportive of the issues that are important and relevant to the business community, our governments, and global communities. Now, much more important than before, the global economic crisis is having a huge impact on industry, both manufacturing and services, and consequently the livelihood of many in our communities. Even in the previously untouchable sector of education, we see universities and colleges being forced to make cutbacks right across the board.

A number of my students in the CEIBS Executive MBA program have recently asked me, "How do I make better decisions in my company, especially nowadays? What steps should I take to assure that my company still survives in

these difficult economic times? What are the different business models we need to adopt so that we are still able to take opportunities when they finally present themselves to us?" It is imperative, especially now, that we in the decision sciences should be able to give guidance in the areas of operations and strategic management, to advise in terms of expenditure in tangible and intangible resources, staffing, marketing, and particularly to assist in constructive and consistent decisions, often difficult nowadays, in finance and portfolio management.

#### **Accomplishments of the 2008-09 Board of Directors**

In the DSI objectives in 2008-2009, there were two areas that were given more attention so they did not continue to form roadblocks in important decision making. These were (1) the recognition of the very important set of constituents in the Institute—the Regions; and (2) clarity in governance—different interpretations and applications of the Institute's constitution and by-laws, policies, and procedures. I established ad hoc committees to address each of these, with charges to Standing Committees to support and/or complement them.

The overall objective in 2008-2009 was to enhance the value of member-

ship in the DSI. It is only in enhancing the value of DSI membership that we attract and maintain our members, and allow DSI to become the institution of first choice to schools, deans, and decision-making professionals. This would have the flow-on effect to our journals and annual meetings. So, in the context of the above, I offered the 2008-09 related goals and sub-goals.

#### **1. Increase member satisfaction and participation**

This focused primarily on the improvement of the quality of the annual meeting, and the improved responsiveness and perception of research excellence of our journals. Steps have been put into place to further improve the services rendered for the 2009 New Orleans Annual Meeting, and I am thankful to the dynamic and driven program chair, Maling Ebrahimpour, who has been making constant demands to the DSI Board to enable him to implement improvements.

DSI published its first "book," *The Dean's Perspective*, edited by Krishna Dhir and provided to all deans of the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB); now a number of deans are asking for additional copies (see page 18). The DSI Board took pains during in-depth discussions, considered



*The DSI Board of Directors gathered for a board meeting in January 2009.*

advice from the Publications Committee, and then supported a motion to approve the start of a new journal named *Supply Chain Management Research (SCMR)* as proposed by Ram Narasimhan and Soumen Ghosh (see page 24). I wish all the success to this journal and look forward to the overall enhancement of all of DSI's publications in a complementary and supportive direction.

## **2. Leveraging of our constituent bodies and networks**

As mentioned above, it was critical that there was a clear recognition of the roles the regional chapters played in the DSI and vice versa, and that a symbiotic relationship was nurtured between the regions and DSI. This was necessary so as to address a rift that had formed the year before. As such, an ad hoc committee, Relationship of Regions with DSI, was set up, eventually chaired by Bob Andrews, and its recommendations fed into the Regional Activities Committee. Much of what was discussed still needs to be accepted and formalized in the constitution and bylaws, as well as the policies and procedures manual, thereby allowing decisions and policies regarding regional relationships to be very clear and consistent. Above all, if the parts (regions) see themselves as genuinely supporting and committed to the whole (DSI), then synergistic benefits will emerge. I truly believe we should work towards this.

## **3. Effective use of IT**

The DSI website continued to be an effective communication tool, with more recommendations on enhancing its content, capabilities, and visibility, and the regional chapters were keen on adopting the overall template. The Home Office IT Liaison Officers have made recommendations for the IT capabilities of the DSI Home Office and we look forward to continual improvements in this area. My sincere thanks go to the IT liaison officers, Arijit Sengupta and Doug White, as well as Vijay Sugumaran (Chair, IT Committee) in this regard.

## **4. Increase the global visibility and acceptance of publications**

There was concern from the *DSJ* editor, Vicki Smith-Daniels, about the present stature of this journal at a number of major institutions. An ad hoc committee, chaired by Ram Narasimhan, was set up to assist the *DSJ* editor to address this issue. With the advent of the expenditure cutbacks, there was also concern regarding the continuation of support from Arizona State University (ASU) for the office of the *DSJ*. After some discussion, this much-needed support was assured by ASU's Chair of Supply Chain Management, Bill Verdini, until mid-2010, the end of the contract term of the present editor. DSI is very grateful for the continuing support of ASU and the WP Carey School of Business in this regard, and particularly so to the sterling efforts of Vicki Smith-Daniels. The other publications, *DSJIE* and *Decision Line*, have done well this last year, and I would like to thank the respective editors, Chetan Sankar and Krishna Dhir, for their great commitment.

## **5. Timely and easier decision making through clear governance structures and mechanisms**

In the recent past, there was some confusion in the decision and voting procedures. It was believed that this confusion arose in DSI governance arising from the differences between what comprised strategic elements (as stated in the constitution and bylaws) and what comprised operational aspects (as in the policies and procedures manual). An ad hoc committee (very ably chaired by Krishna Dhir) was charged to institute some clarity and consistency in, and interpretation of, these two areas/approaches. Most of the recommendations of this committee were accepted by the Board, and indeed, a continuation of this committee into next year is most likely to be recommended so that implementation of the recommendations can be made.

Another path of improvement in governance was seen to be responsive and clearer financial reporting and investment options, to enable continued funding of projects and responsible Institute

operations and expenditure. A Budget/Finance Committee was created with the treasurer chairing the meetings prior to Executive/Board meetings. Benefits from this committee have already been realized in the last few Board meetings in terms of clear and concise information provided to track the budgetary process and make financial decisions. I would like to thank the former treasurer, Janelle Heineke, and the present treasurer, Chris Kydd, in spearheading this process.

Many of the above sub-goals were interrelated. There was a heavy reliance on the recommendations of the committees, especially the ad hoc committees, and committees for regional activities, member services, IT, publications, programs and meetings, and many others. My genuine appreciation goes to the Institute's committees, and elected and appointed officials who played important roles in the efficient functioning, growth, and development of the Institute, and ultimately really supporting me in my role as president. The recommendations provided by these committees and officials have provided guidance to the Board of Directors. I believe that the adoption and continual implementation of many of these recommendations will ultimately increase the value of membership in the DSI. Finally, I would like to thank Carol Latta, our executive director, and everyone at the Home Office for being consistent in their support and motivation to nurture the DSI.

The groundwork has been laid for the future, and with the able leadership of the 2009-2010 president, Ram Narasimhan, the president-elect, Keong Leong, and the incoming Board of Directors, I am confident that the Institute will continue being a vanguard of relevance in the global community. In closing, I would like to thank you again for the honor and privilege of serving as your president this past year.

Norma J Harrison (海若琳)  
President, Decision Sciences Institute  
China Europe International Business  
School (CEIBS)  
Shanghai, CHINA