

■ Barbara B. Flynn, Babcock Graduate School of Management, Wake Forest University

# From the Editor

**I**n this issue, we focus on relevance of teaching and research in the decision sciences. A number of articles address ways to improve the relevance and liveliness of teaching decision sciences topics. Others focus on preparing students for competing in the global job market and research productivity of MIS faculty.

We begin with International Issues, by Manoj Malhotra, University of South Carolina, in which he describes his recent visit to a Daimler Benz workshop in Germany with some of his international business students. The workshop was designed to assess the capabilities of the students as potential Daimler Benz employees, demonstrating the care with which this international giant selects its employees. Manoj describes the international recruiting process, as well as providing insights related to the management of Daimler Benz's global operations, including the management/engineer mix, global product development, competitive priorities and global vision.

In the Production/Operations Management feature, David Hartvigsen of the University of Notre Dame describes the use of the web for adding interest to introductory operations management classes. He focuses on the use of OM software companies, whose home pages include demos, descriptions of successful implementations and the use of many terms that the students are using in class. In addition, he finds that the sheer number of these sites helps students understand the importance of effective operations management.

Kun Shin Im, University of South Carolina, and Kee Young Kim and Joon S. Kim, both of Yonsei University, provide a ranking of leading MIS researchers and institutions in the Research Issues feature. They particularly highlight the contributions of new researchers to the literature in the field.

In his Classroom feature column, Rick Hesse describes the use of the simple visual

tools which are now available to help students examine data. In addition to helping make statistics more readily understandable, these tools are useful for teaching as well, for example, in demonstrating whether a set of data exhibits the properties of a normal distribution.

Andrew Vazsonyi, University of San Francisco, in the Specialist with a Universal Mind, raises the issue of how to motivate young students (high school age or younger) in the study of Management Science. He points out that most current books do little to motivate interest in the topic, although there is a substantial pool of students who excelled in math in high school and who may potentially have interest in management. He concludes that we need to do a better job of showing the relationship of math to the real world.

In the Book Reviews feature, Katherine Chudoba of the University of Virginia suggests two books that provide a lively and interesting overview of systems analysis and design. Rather than the typical life cycle focus of most textbooks, these focus on problem solving, examples and best practices.

As you read these features, I think you will find many interesting suggestions, as well as thought-provoking ideas. ■

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