

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

We have lots of interesting features and information in this issue of *Decision Line*, as we get ready for the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Decision Sciences Institute. We begin with the words of Lee Krajewski, president of the Decision Sciences Institute. He describes the International DSI Conference in Athens this summer. I'd like to second everything that he says about the conference. It was a truly international experience, with participants from all over the world reaching out to a large body of academics who normally are not able to participate in DSI meetings. I'd like to add to his comments about signs in Greek; how could any self-respecting member of DSI not be able to read Greek signs? After all, these are the symbols that we use every day! Actually, this is somewhat of an exaggeration, but we did find that some of the signs that appeared to be in Greek were actually English words written using the Greek alphabet. All it takes is a little patience and thought about Greek mathematical symbols. My personal favorites were ΤΑΞΙ and ΠΟΙΧΟΡΝ (hint: remember, P is "rho" in Greek).

In the "International Issues" feature, William Youngdahl, of Thunderbolt – American Graduate School of International Business, and Rohit Verma and Ken Boyer, both of DePaul University, share their experiences as young academics teaching classes abroad in places ranging from Sydney, Helsinki, Hong Kong, and Bangkok to Shanghai. They provide practical advice on everything from what to take, to how to deal with jet lag, to how to get a taxi in Hong Kong. They also deal with important teaching issues, including the perception of young faculty by international audiences, how to speak to audiences for whom English is a second or third language, and tips for making the content interesting and relevant to local audiences.

Ram Narasimhan, of Michigan State University, provides an update about his editorship of *Decision Sciences* in the "Research Issues" feature. He provides useful information about the focus of articles that are appropriate for submission to *Decision Sciences* and an update on the status of the journal's web page. Make sure to chat with him in the "Meet the Editor" session at the DSI conference. In the "Production/Opera-

tions Management" feature, Diane Parente, of Pennsylvania State University-Erie, discusses the need for alternative methodologies in POM empirical research. In particular, she describes the use of data modeling principles, which are especially relevant for the sort of cross-disciplinary research which many POM researchers pursue. She provides detail on data management and processing, as well as an example of data modeling in use.

Lance Eliot, of Eliot and Associates, provides the transcript of a keynote address that he recently made to 600 IT managers and executives on the topic of global IT issues for CIO's, in the "Information Technology" feature. His discussion includes such issues as the definition of a "world class" CIO and the implementation of global IT solutions. In "In the Classroom," Rick Hesse, of Pepperdine University, discusses the usefulness of a strong foundation in Excel for both undergraduate and graduate students, enhancing their marketability. He provides some useful and little known Excel tips, including formatting tricks, such as how to include a social security number as a number (rather than alphanumeric with dashes), without Excel trying to subtract where the dashes are, hiding sensitive data and redefining buttons to custom formats.

Finally, in "From the Bookshelf," Andrew Ruppel, of the University of Virginia, discusses a number of books that look at the future, establishing connections between sometimes unusual phenomena. The books he reviews include a set of lectures on the tools of scientific revolutions, sponsored by the New York Public Library, a set of lectures by various experts at the ACM on the future of technology, a quirky book on serendipitous interactions, and a book on the psychological predisposition to prefer certain spatial arrangements and architecture.

I hope you will be able to attend the 30th Anniversary Annual Meeting of the Decision Sciences Institute, located in New Orleans, which was the site of the very first DSI (actually, it was AIDS then) meeting. It should be a great meeting, including the usual great features, plus some very special events commemorating our 30th anniversary. See y'all on Bourbon Street and *laissez les bon temps roulez!* ■



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