

■ G. Keong Leong, Management Department, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

This year we invited the two candidates for the elected position of president-elect to provide their visions of the Institute. In this special column, Professor Janelle Heineke, Boston University, and Professor Ram Narasimhan, Michigan State University, present their views. Enjoy! [G. Keong Leong, Editor, Decision Line]



Janelle Heineke

In today's increasingly complex business world, being able to link and think across boundaries is increasingly important. The Decision Sci-

ences Institute, as "a multidisciplinary international association dedicated to advancing knowledge and improving instruction in all business and related disciplines" (in the words of the organization's mission statement), is uniquely positioned among professional management societies to span these boundaries.

My vision for DSI is an organization that is DSI: Dynamic, Service-oriented and Inclusive.



A dynamic organization is constantly evolving and improving. The Institute needs to build on our traditions and what has been the foundation of our past success by introducing new ways to be responsive to our membership. It is important to be nimble and flexible enough to meet the constantly changing needs of our members.

DSI exists to serve its members. Since the Institute's beginnings, the Annual Meeting has provided a venue for members to share our work and to network with others within our own disciplines and across disciplines. Our journals, *Decision Sciences* and the *Decision Sciences Journal of Innovative Education*, have provided another channel for sharing our ideas. Technology now of-

fers us additional opportunities for connecting and sharing throughout the year. DSI's website can be leveraged as a place for exchange of research ideas, sharing of syllabi and teaching materials, and linking to other sites that would be of interest and value.

The more inclusive our organization, the more likely it is to be successful in the future. Past DSI leaders have worked hard to bring DSI to where it is today. As we move forward, we must welcome new members to become involved; to bring their new ideas and talents to the organization so that DSI can, in fact, be dynamic and service-oriented.

Janelle Heineke is professor and chair of the Department of Operations and Technology Management, at the School of Management, Boston University.
jheineke@bu.edu



Ram Narasimhan

As a nominee for president elect of Decision Sciences Institute, I welcome the opportunity to share my vision for the future of the Institute. It is, at once, a privilege and an honor to be nominated to serve the membership in this capacity. I have served the Institute in various capacities during my 31-year association with DSI. As a member of the Board, I understand the critical challenges we face and the need to act with courage and innovative thinking. The principal challenges that we face are: strong competition from other professional societies for membership; perceived quality of DSI and its offerings relative to other societies (conferences, use of IT, collaboration with other societies, journals, etc.); and the need for increasing the effectiveness of DSI governance structure and energiz-

ing the DSI family to engage constructively in enhancing the reputation and quality of DSI. We need to position the Institute for future growth and ensure its reputation as the premier, "multidisciplinary" professional association dedicated to decision making in organizations. My vision for the future is rooted in the following values: *Quality in all DSI offerings, Inclusiveness, Cross disciplinarity, Transparency and responsiveness, and Global outlook*. I would strive to make these a part of DSI culture.

The reputation of DSI is largely driven by the quality and reputation of its journals and conferences—national and regional. While we can be proud of the academic tradition and reputation of DSI journals, we must sustain and enhance their reputations for quality through increased involvement of top-notch scholars, judicious promotion of the journal among top-tier schools and greater involvement of prominent international researchers and scholars. In addition, it is important for DSI to *innovate* by exploring new opportunities for serving its members such as new journals, DSI case collection or exchange and DSI-sponsored mini-conferences and symposia, perhaps jointly with other professional societies. The annual meetings should reflect our core value: "high quality in all our offerings." We must increase the *quality and relevance* (to our membership) of the Institute's annual conferences through targeted professional development opportunities in research and teaching, teaching symposia, focused sessions on emerging areas such as Service Science and featuring sessions in allied disciplines such as strategy and health care management that emphasize cross-disciplinary research and decision-making. These should be evaluated for fit with DSI's

mission, need for future growth, *better competitive positioning of the Institute* and providing superior value to our membership. The conferences—national and regional—must deliver value to **all** our members (researchers as well as those from teaching-oriented schools). Lastly, the institute serves its members via the placement service and facilitating networking with colleagues with similar interests. We can do more through innovative use of Web-enabled technology and redesigning our conference format to promote networking opportunities. DSI must leverage the loyalty of its membership in the face of stiff competition from other professional associations. A commitment to and emphasis on high quality in all DSI offerings will best position the Institute to serve its members in the future and strengthen our competitive position and stature among academicians.

DSI must continue to serve its members from both research and teaching schools through its commitment to *inclusiveness*. These two customer segments must be served effectively through our journals and conferences. We should strive to increase the involvement of scholars from top-tier schools in our journals and conference offerings. I will rely on the Institute's Fellows to further this objective. Greater (and strategically meaningful) involvement by the Fellows would enable us to leverage their reputations in their respective disciplines. Business schools are increasingly emphasizing teaching excellence. DSI should promote teaching excellence through additional teaching symposia, sessions on technology use and integration in teaching, and other sessions of interest to teacher scholars. These sessions will find support from deans and chairs. Our offerings must be actively promoted to deans and chairs so that attendance at our conferences—national and regional—is strengthened. We should include practitioner professionals in the decision sciences and actively seek their participation in our conferences and journals.

"*Cross disciplinarity*," a term coined by one of my colleagues, recognizes

multiple disciplines, and stresses an integrated approach to solving important problems that confront organizations and society. Cross disciplinarity could be pursued via invited sessions, by expanding the content of our sessions to include allied disciplines, special workshops and mini-conferences on cross-disciplinary research, and establishing special interest groups. Cross-disciplinarity-based initiatives will bring the added benefit of increase in membership and unique, high quality sessions at our conferences.

DSI must embrace the value of *transparency and responsiveness in serving its members*. It is essential to keep members informed of important initiatives of the Institute and to solicit member participation to ensure their success. It is important to involve the members in the implementation of key initiatives through committees, act on key recommendations of committees expeditiously, and develop forums for having open communication with members.

Lastly, I think it is important to *imburse the Institute with a global outlook*. DSI must actively seek the involvement and participation of scholars from abroad. DSI is uniquely positioned for such global reach through our international regions in Mexico, Asia-Pacific and the newly established region in India. Global outlook should be reflected in the composition of the editorial boards of our journals and the participation of international scholars in our conferences. I will work to actively promote joint conferences and collaboration with professional associations to increase the visibility and stature of DSI globally.

I do not profess to have all the answers. I have given considerable thought to DSI's future well-being and the need for innovation. I pledge my strong commitment to furthering these values if elected as your president. It can be done through the involvement and energy of the DSI family. Together, we can ensure DSI's future growth as a global institute dedicated to the advancement of the decision sciences.

Ram Narasimhan is University Distinguished Professor, John H. McConnell Professor of Business Administration, at The Eli Broad College of Business, Michigan State University.
narasimh@bus.msu.edu ■

EDITOR, from page 3

The authors suggest that researchers should focus their studies on collaborative decision making because organizations compete in a world characterized by "global/dynamic markets, network organizations, pervasive computing, continuous learning, mass customization, socio-political diversity, and frequent storms." They consider collaborative decision making in an electronic commerce context as well as in a supply chain context.

Professor Barbara J. Cargill, Trinity College, University of Melbourne, observes that business schools in Australia are facing stiff competition because of the high number of schools in the system. She develops a model of key organizational and managerial capabilities that are needed for an entrepreneurial university in Australia to compete in this tough environment. She finds "that most universities do more or less know how to be more entrepreneurial but many lack the key leadership to drive it." Consequently, deans are in the driver's seat and can be the primary enabler, or the primary blocker, of this entrepreneurial activity.

Professor Peter T. Ittig, University of Massachusetts, presents the findings from the final report of the Commission on the Future of Higher Education. He notes that several recommendations such as the demands for learning assessment and outcome assessment are currently being implemented. He also points out that as funding for higher education becomes tighter we will see increasing pressures for greater accountability, more evidence of student learning, and greater efficiency.

See you all in Phoenix soon! ■