
Preface

Jay Liebowitz

Department of Information Technology
Carey Business School
Johns Hopkins University
9601 Medical Center Drive
Rockville, MD 20850-3332, USA
Fax: 301-315-2892
E-mail: jliebow1@jhu.edu

Rajeev K. Bali

Department of Knowledge and Information Management
Faculty of Engineering and Computing
Coventry University
Priory Street, Coventry
West Midlands CV1 5FB, UK
E-mail: r.bali@coventry.ac.uk

Nilmini Wickramasinghe*

Centre for the Management of Medical Technology (CMMT)
Stuart School of Business
Illinois Institute of Technology
565 W Adams St., Suite 406
Chicago, IL 60661, USA
E-mail: nilmini@stuart.iit.edu
*Corresponding author

As today's environment is increasingly competitive, organisations must find new ways to foster innovation on a timely basis. Many organisations are looking towards knowledge management and social networking as ways to increase collaboration, knowledge flows, and innovations. Research shows that the informal networks typically stimulate new ideas versus the formal organisational charts. In addition, it is often the weak ties, specifically the associations made outside one's own group, that serve as catalysts for innovation.

In order to better map knowledge flows, informal networks and knowledge gaps in organisations, Social Network Analysis (SNA) has been used to identify the relationships between individuals, departments, or other entities in order to improve collaboration and knowledge creation. SNA has developed from the sociology, anthropology and education disciplines, and is a wonderful technique to apply in the

knowledge management field. In fact, the International Network of Social Network Analysts (INSNA – www.insna.org) is a community of researchers, practitioners and educators looking to advance the social network analysis field.

We are very pleased to assemble some of the leading work in the knowledge flow and social networking areas for this special issue. The research in this special issue reflects contributions from throughout the world, and shows how SNA and related knowledge management concepts can provide a better view of the organisation from a knowledge mapping perspective. We hope this special issue serves as a forum to generate new ideas and applications in applying social networking and knowledge flow analysis to organisations. Enjoy!