
Editorial

Jason C.H. Chen

Graduate School of Business,
Gonzaga University,
Spokane, WA 99258, USA
E-mail: chen@jepson.gonzaga.edu

P. Pete Chong

Institutional Research,
National Taitung University,
Taitung, Taiwan
E-mail: p.pete.chong@gmail.com

Biographical notes: Jason C.H. Chen is a Professor and the Coordinator of the MIS programme at Gonzaga University in Spokane, WA, USA. He received his PhD in Management Science and Information Systems from the University of Texas at Austin. He designed and implemented an MIS system for a Chinese government agency to a World Bank project in 1992–1994. He was teaching in the Beijing International MBA programme in 1999 and 2003 at Peking University, China. He was a Senior Consultant for an e-commerce and knowledge management firm in Taiwan. His research interests include revenue management, mobile learning as well as the development of model and strategy of knowledge reuse to enterprises. He serves on many editorial boards and is the Editor-in-Chief for three journals: *Int. J. Revenue Management*, *Int. J. of Mobile Learning and Organization* and *Int. J. Business and Systems Research*. He has published numerous articles in such journals as *Management Science*, *Decision Support Systems*, *Industrial Management and Data Systems*, *ACM Transactions on Mathematical Software*, *Int. J. Technology Management* and *Human Systems Management*.

P. Pete Chong is currently the Dean of Institutional Research and is a Professor of MIS at National Taitung University, Taiwan. Prior to his return to Taiwan, he was a Martel Corp. Professor of CIS at the University of Houston-Downtown until 2005. Before that, he taught at Gonzaga University, University of Idaho and Southeastern Louisiana University, where he also served as the Head of the Business Research Unit and as the Editor for *Southeastern Economic Outlook*. His research interests are in Pareto principle and its application to information systems, including knowledge and education, franchising concept, information systems for SME and e-government.

It is a great honour to have been invited to edit the special issue of the *Int. J. Technology Management (IJTM)*, which studies and examines ‘Strategy and information management in the innovative era’. The general themes of this special issue of the IJTM seek to develop our understanding of organisational strategy and information management used to improve competitive advantage and create sustainable value in the organisation. It also

provides an international forum for discussions of advancements in technology management in this innovative era. Information is a critical resource, therefore constant innovation in the management of information and strategy is required for a sustainable company as it responds to today's business demands in a much more dynamic environment. To succeed in an unpredictable competitive marketplace, firms need to manage their information and strategy effectively and innovatively. This special issue aims to align latest practice, innovation and case studies with academic frameworks and theories. The objectives of this special issue are to cover the role of strategy and information management of firms' competitiveness in the innovative age.

This special issue collects 18 papers authored by scholars from 10 countries across Europe, Asia and North America continent, with a wide range of subjects that include both businesses of different scales and governments of different levels. The scopes include the knowledge assessment for making financial decisions in start-up companies to how strategy and innovation affect the operation of a large state-owned corporation. The subject matters are extensive as well: from the effect of knowledge management to research methodology and measurement to the fundamental question of the atomic unit of knowledge.

With the globalisation and the availability in technology, being effective and efficient continues to be the necessary conditions, but they alone no longer constitute a sufficient condition. In a long-term perspective, a firm must deal with future, unknown environmental changes that include new demands and new competitions. Thus, strategic alignment and alliances do play an essential role in an innovative era. All these strategic maneuvers still base on decisions and to obtain the proper information to support these decisions is the foundation of this issue.

The strategic decisions, though made at a certain period in time, are necessarily dynamic in nature. That is, it must be flexible enough to adapt to the changing environment – since there is little certainty of what the future may ensue. Thus, researches must not look at few values of an attribute but rather focus on a *spectrum* of values as well as the flexibility only a modular system may provide. 'Management of dualities as a critical dimension of a knowledge-era organisations' (Biloslavo) and 'Infomemes and infonomes: in search of knowledge DNA' fall into this category (Chong and Chen).

'Understanding the critical factors effect user satisfaction and impact of ERP through innovation of diffusion theory' (Hsu, Lai and Weng) and 'The environmental sustainability of information systems: considering the impact of operational strategies and practices' (Haigh and Griffiths) use a variety of methodologies to identify these attributes. However, after knowing the relationships – or even causalities – between actions and reactions, it is still important to understand what a company wants for its future and, more importantly, *why* it wants to move towards that direction. Action is the manifestation of strategy, if not the strategy itself – as the article 'Strategy and strategic action in the global era: overcoming the knowing-doing gap' (Zeleny). The article outlines a five-step action plan for company strategy execution.

Since each company occupies a different position on an attribute spectrum, a company may take advantage of the strengths of its position and tools in its possession to create competitive advantages. In this category we have 'Market information feedback for the high-tech dominated IPO companies' (Shih, Lin, Huang and Chiang), 'Network economics for open source technologies' (Gottinger), 'Google and global market search: information signals and knowledge indices' (Millar, Choi and Millar),

'The transformation of a traditional salt company into biotech business through innovations and reforms: a case study of Taiyen' (Cheng, Chen and Lin), 'Small firm transformation through IS' (Levy and Powell) and 'The process of business start-ups in the internet: a multiple case study' (Serarols-Tarrés). These articles clearly show the vastly different ways strategic innovation and innovative strategies are intertwined.

If we view the strategic alignment as a way to create a focus within a corporation to enhance efficiency, if not effectiveness, then the global economy has created the great opportunity for strategic alliance to combine scattered 'necessary' conditions to obtain the 'sufficient' condition. 'Evaluating IT outsourcing customer satisfaction and its impact on firm performance' (Yoon and Im), 'Developing the partner relationship management system for franchised electronic stores' (Yang, Lin, Liu, Chao and Chen) and 'Capturing strategic alliance outcomes: an analysis of motives, objectives and outcomes' (Hynes and Mollenkopf) discuss issues in this realm.

A further collection of papers addressing specific needs of industries may be found in 'Intellectual capital and business performance in the Portuguese banking industry' (Cabrita and Bontis), 'An innovative model of a computer-mediated professional community: China software developer net' (Assimakopoulos and Yan), 'KMsharer: an information technology approach to enable knowledge management service' (Chang, Chen and Lin) and 'The impact of knowledge management enablers on non-financial performance in small and medium enterprises' (Lee, Ho and Chiu).

Indeed, from this issue it is clear that the coverage of strategy and information management in the innovation era is multidimensional – it is cross-disciplined and it benefits from all tools. For those areas where *structuredness* may not have yet been found, logics and philosophic analyses may become a viable addition to quantitative methods. However, it is our hope that this issue provides angles that may assist our quest of knowledge and wisdom to move ahead, or aside; and in the process we can catch a glimpse of what constitute the necessary and sufficient condition – the basis of any strategy for the future. Of course, the necessary part comes from identifying the attributes (i.e. the segmentation of knowledge type – both the contents and processes and the definition and quantification of knowledge) and the sufficient condition may come from the strategic alliances of holders of various knowledge spaces. Thus, when the essence of knowledge is viewed as a unit (as if it were a commodity), then the efficiency (i.e. the economics) and effectiveness can be better assessed – which in turn may provide the basis for future improvement. In the process of economic development, the organisational structure has become global and the management tool set for supply chain has included both the integration for internal and the cooperation for external members. For such alignments and alliances, the *packeting* of knowledge and information to be shared through public and private channels thus becomes an interesting topic for research.

Though far from being comprehensive, we think this special issue does present an eclectic view of what knowledge management is and we believe that it will be beneficial to the advancement of research in this area. The editors would like to thank Dr. Mohammed Dorgham for the opportunity to put together this issue.