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## Editorial

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### Bruce Chien-Ta Ho

Institute of Electronic Commerce,  
National Chung Hsing University,  
250, Kuo Kuang Road, Taichung 402, Taiwan  
Fax: +886-4-22859497  
E-mail: bruceho@nchu.edu.tw

### Peter A.C. Smith

The Leadership Alliance Inc.,  
2 – 30 Laguna Parkway,  
Brechin, Ontario L0K 1B0, Canada  
E-mail: pasmith@tlainc.com

### Jayanthi Ranjan\*

Department of Information Management and Systems,  
Institute of Management Technology,  
Raj Nagar, Ghaziabad, India  
E-mail: jranjan@imt.edu  
\*Corresponding author

**Biographical notes:** Bruce Chien-Ta Ho is an Associate Professor in the Institute of E-Commerce at National Chung Hsing University. He has over 95 publications in the forms of journal papers, books, edited books, edited proceedings, edited special issues and conference papers. Sample of his work could be found in *Computers and Operations Research*, *Journal of the Operational Research Society*, *International Journal of Production Research*, *Online Information Review*, *Industrial Management and Data System* and *International Journal of Information Technology and Decision Making*. He is also the Editor of the *International Journal of Value Chain Management* and *International Journal of Electronic Customer Relationship Management*.

Peter A.C. Smith is the President of The Leadership Alliance Inc. (TLA), a wholly 'complex adaptive systems' based consortium of associates. He is also a member of Centre for Business Information, Organisation & Process Management at University of Westminster Business School, UK. He has served as a Professor of Management Learning Processes with the Canadian School of Management, as Executive Director of the International Foundation for Action Learning in Canada. He is the Managing Editor of the *Journal of Knowledge Management Practice*. He has published more than 50 academic papers on a broad range of topics related to performance enhancement.

Jayanthi Ranjan is currently a Professor at the Institute of Management Technology, Ghaziabad India. She is also the Chairperson of International Relations, Institute of Management Technology, Ghaziabad, India. She has over 110 publications in total, 50 in various international journals, 30 national conference proceedings and 30 international conferences and published seven edited books. She received best papers awards twice. She is also the recipient of 'Best Teacher Award' from AIMA-Ghaziabad Management Association in India. Her teaching and research interests include data mining, building data warehouses and information systems design. She is serving on the editorial board for various international journals.

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To accommodate new customer expectations, market conditions or competitive challenges, every business needs adaptable processes that support an agile business model. Taking advantage of opportunities as they arise, requires business applications that can readily support changes to both the processes and organisational structure.

Having an information enabled business infrastructure that drives operational excellence for business core processes gives a distinct advantage over less-prepared competitors and puts the business processes on a level playing field with larger enterprises. Taking immediate advantage of proven business practices learned over the years by global enterprises gives a competitive advantage in new markets or industries. It also helps eliminate common growth pains, from erratic cost controls and poor-quality processes to fragmented information. Companies can take a number of different steps to ensure they are being as flexible as they need to be to continue to grow successfully and meet internal needs, customer requirements and changing government obligations.

At the *International Conference on Innovations in Redefining Business Horizons (IIRB 2008)* IMT Ghaziabad, India nearly 260 academicians and practitioners from around the world gathered to present research on the topic of business innovation and development. By doing so, these researchers shared state-of-the-art best practices with their colleagues from academia, government and industry. This diffusion of best practices is considered to be a factor in fostering the growth of business excellence globally. The innovative interdisciplinary nature of the *IIRB 2008 Conference*, with participants attending from every continent and from diverse academic disciplines, provides hope that a common definition of business excellence can be developed in the future. The positive outcomes that manifest from working collaboratively and systematically across functional boundaries to develop test and document global best practices far outweigh the risks of pursuing such an agenda.

We are pleased to introduce this special issue 'Business innovations in redefining business realms'. This Special Issue contains eight papers, discussing major challenges and development for business processes. Below is a brief overview of the papers that appear in this issue.

Service quality has become a strategic option for many educational institutions around the globe. Both private and public schools strive to provide quality services to its students in order to develop and maintain their reputation. Arivalan Ramaiyah and Ahmad Nurulazam Md. Zain identify the quality of services provided by the Malaysian public and private schools from students' viewpoint as a customer. It also includes the discussions on the most common methods used to measure the service quality by prominent researchers. The domestic cosmetics and toiletries industry has been growing at 15–20% over the last few years, in price sensitive Indian market. Pinakapani, Seshagiri

and Sruti study the attitudes, service usage frequency and customer satisfaction on selected products and services from identified sources like international, national and local branded beauty parlours located in and around City of Visakhapatnam, India.

Today, international competition makes it imperative that Western governments and firms have a better understanding of Chinese business and relationship management practices in order to effectively engage with their Chinese competitors, suppliers and customers. Antony Drew and Anton Kriz explore *guanxi* practice involves drawing on interpersonal, mutually reciprocal relationships either through directly known parties or indirectly known third parties, in order to minimise business risk.

Nagendra in his paper makes an effort to examine the issues related to the pricing and cost (revenue) recovery mechanism practiced in a Corporation City in Mangalore India. The study is carried out with the support of available secondary and the field level primary data. The study brought out the different aspects related to the problem of water provisions and the dimensions of pricing mechanism prevailed and experienced in a growing Corporation City like Mangalore in Karnataka.

Celebrity endorsement business is very big in India, simply because India is a very 'celebrity starved' market. Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) report points out that 60% of the Indian brands use celebrities in some form or other. Muruganantham and Kaliyamoorthy, in their paper focus on the role played by the celebrities in positioning the select fairness cream brands through television (TV) advertisement in India. This research has given some insight about the role played by the celebrities in positioning the brand in the target segment mind. Their findings and recommendations may be useful for the brand managers and advertising agencies of the respective companies to fine tune their celebrity advertisement.

The increase in the competition in every sector of the business has forced the business organisation to become a brand of universal acceptance. The electronic CRM (e-CRM) with the application of the data mining tools can help better analysis the customer data which will enhance the profitability of the organisation and also helps to improve the relationship of the customers with the firms. Ranjan and Bhatnagar present in their paper the techniques, process and application of e-CRM using data mining (DM) techniques.

Studies conducted on the financing of small scale industries have generally pointed out small scale industries face problems due to poor financing issues. Sushma Rani Verma and Bodla review literature about the financing of small scale industries and also bring out the financial problems faced by several units after the phase of liberalisation. The study shows that the small scale firms are facing more problems than large firms. There is a great scope of research in this field, especially in the Indian context because the small scale enterprises occupy a unique position in the Indian economy for its contribution towards value addition, employment generation and the expansion of entrepreneurial base and also for the diversification of the industrial sector.

Leadership roles in global corporations have been changing steadily and what is working today for a leader may be the same even five years down the line. The cardinal theme of leadership in future will be to focus on the emergence of identity and relationships. Sanjay Singh and Sahay investigate the antecedents of business excellence in global corporations across industry through emotionally intelligent leadership qualities. The study involved collecting data through literature reviews for developing a model for use in corporations across industry which have global presence. The data collected were content analysed for developing a conceptual model for empirical

validation across culture. The literature reviewed and its content analysis has given a very clear message about the role of leadership who are intelligent emotionally in making a corporation successful across the globe.

The guest editors would like to thank all the authors for submitting their papers to this Special Issue and the reviewers for their valuable comments and contribution.

We thank Inderscience Publishers for making this special issue possible.