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## Introduction

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### Nilmini Wickramasinghe\*

School of Business Information Technology  
RMIT University, Australia  
E-mail: nilmini.work@gmail.com  
\*Corresponding author

### Wilfred V. Huang

College of Business  
Alfred University  
Alfred, NY 14802, USA  
E-mail: fhuang@alfred.edu

**Biographical notes:** Professor Nilmini Wickramasinghe (PhD) researches and teaches within the information systems domain with particular focus on the applications of these areas to healthcare and thereby effecting superior healthcare delivery. She has written more than 100 refereed scholarly articles, several books and an encyclopaedia. In addition, she regularly presents her work throughout North America as well as in Europe and Australasia. She is a Professor at the Business Information Technology School at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University in Australia. She is also US representative of the Health Care Technology Management Association and the Editor-in-Chief of two scholarly journals published by Inderscience.

Wilfred Vincent Huang received his BS, MS and PhD degrees in the USA. He has been on the faculty of Alfred University, USA since 1983. Huang is the George G. Raymond Chair in Family Business and Professor of Management Information Systems at Alfred University. He is also the Director of the Confucius Institute at Alfred University. His research interests include e-business and entrepreneurship. He has numerous publications in both fields. He has been the Associate Editor and Guest Editor of many journals. Huang is also the Co-Chair of the Wuhan International Conference on e-Business, which takes place in Wuhan, China every summer.

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This special issue consists of seven articles from the *Seventh Wuhan International Conference on E-Business* which was held on 28–29 May 2008 in Wuhan, China. Most of these papers focus on key e-business issues including impact on finance, business models, competitive advantage as well as strategic uses of technology on firms or countries in emerging economies such as China.

The first paper by Han and Nui ‘The effect of the internet on FDI in the East and Middle/West of China’ studies the effect of internet on FDI in East and Middle/West China. Next, the paper by Feng *et al.* ‘A user oriented model for global enterprise portal design’ aims to highlight the challenges of enterprise portals for international, transnational and multinational businesses, paying special attention to the influence of

national culture on enterprise portal design. Paper three 'Testing the validity of purchasing power parity hypothesis: a study based on the RMB/USD exchange rate' is by Yu and Zhu and tests validity of the purchasing power parity (PPP) hypothesis for estimation and determination of the RMB/USD exchange rate. The fourth paper 'Intellectual capital and corporate performance: an empirical analysis from Chinese listed companies' by Ran *et al.* examines how Intellectual Capital (IC) affects the corporate performance in Chinese listed companies. Paper five 'Empirical research on the relationship between organisational learning and enterprise SCA' by Li and Yuan examines the relationship between organisational learning and Sustainable Competition Advantage (SCA). The sixth paper 'CRBT customer churn prediction, can data mining techniques work?' by Su *et al.* focuses on value added services for China telecom services. Paper seven by Gu *et al.* 'Is performance driven by industry effects or firm effects? – An empirical research on the listed companies in China by variance components analysis' uses an empirical research on 1070 listed companies' performance in 20 industries by variance components analysis to examine issues pertaining to a structured based view of the firm versus a resource based view of the firm.

In order for us to develop a comprehensive understanding of the impact of e-business on both a country and/or company it is useful to get a global perspective and focus on studies in various parts of the world. We believe that the papers that make up this special issue will enable our readers to appreciate and learn about key issues of e-business in emerging economies and in doing so also develop a better appreciation of the full potential of any e-business initiative. We trust that our readers are both informed and inspired by the miscellany to further research critical issues pertaining to e-business.