

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Achieving the *MISQ* Trifecta Vision: Reflections on the 2016–2020 Journey

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In my inaugural editorial, I shared *MIS Quarterly*'s trifecta vision on which we would focus during my tenure as EIC. To recap, this vision for *MISQ* has three complementary aspects:¹

- **Impact** on scholarship and practice.
- **Range** in the types of work published with respect to problems, perspectives, theories, methods, and stakeholders.
- **Speed** in executing effective editorial processes.

This vision sought to build on the cumulative contributions to *MISQ* by my 11 predecessors in the EIC role and the scholarly community in roles as authors, editors, and reviewers.²

In this, my final editorial, I reflect on the state of *MISQ* and the portfolio of initiatives that we implemented in the last five years to achieve the trifecta vision.

The State of MISQ

MISQ is in a very strong position. We have established a high-performance culture and set of practices that have been instrumental in our accomplishments:

- Executing editorial processes with quality *and* speed, and publishing interesting research³
- Achieving significant impact on scholarship and practice⁴
- Garnering strong loyalty from the community⁵

The flow of submissions is very strong and has expanded significantly, with about 900–1000 submissions (new submissions and revisions) per year.

¹Rai, A. 2016. "Editor's Comments: The *MIS Quarterly* Trifecta: Impact, Range, Speed," *MIS Quarterly* (40: 1), pp. iii-x.

²See the following editorial for the key initiatives and achievements of the former 11 *MISQ* EICs: Rai, A. 2016. "Celebrating Forty Years of *MIS Quarterly*: *MISQ*'s History and Future Through the Lenses of its Editors-in-Chief," *MIS Quarterly* (40:4), pp. iii- xiv.

³*MISQ* has consistently excelled on quality and speed of the review process in the yearly AIS Senior Scholars Journal Review Quality Survey; it has also ranked as the top journal on interestingness of work that is published.

⁴*MISQ* has consistently been the top IS journal on 2-year and 5-year journal impact factors. Work published in *MISQ* is also having a broader impact on stakeholders; for example, articles in *MISQ* have been versioned in leading practitioner outlets, and they have been used to justify Federal IT policy and inform policy discussions in the United States Congress related to digital platforms.

⁵*MISQ* has been consistently ranked as the top IS journal on Net Promoter Score (a measure of loyalty) by the AIS Senior Scholars Journal Review Quality Survey.

MISQ has also done very well on *inclusivity* of authors. In terms of publications in 2016–2020:

- We published a total of 285 articles across 20 issues from 693 unique authors in 31 countries.
- 54% of the articles were from first-time *MISQ* authors, ranging from 42% in 2017 to 61% in 2020.
- 18% of the articles were from author teams where none of the authors had previously published in *MISQ*; 54% were from teams with an average of 0–1 *MISQ* articles per member (total number of articles by members / number of members); 73% were from teams with an average of 0–2 *MISQ* articles per member.

Looking at diversity, *MISQ* has a diverse editorial board with respect to expertise in topics, theories, and methods of editors. The theoretical perspectives and research methods employed across published articles are wide-ranging, as seen in any issue of the journal. The current editorial board is 32% female and 68% male, and has members from 13 countries.

The Portfolio of Initiatives

Here, I briefly share the initiatives we pursued to achieve the trifecta vision.

Virtuous Editorial Processes

We have worked to develop a culture and a set of practices to orchestrate virtuous editorial processes.

Virtuous Reviewing: We have promoted virtuous reviewing through the sharing of editorials on writing virtuous reviews and developing virtuous reviewers. I engaged in detailed discussions on expectations in this regard prior to making editorial board appointments, and we routinely discussed these norms and best practices at board meetings and workshops. And, we have expanded the pool of reviewers in the community with a virtuous reviewing mindset through workshops.

SE–AE Engagement: We institutionalized the practice of SE–AE engagement to orchestrate the editorial process. This includes SE–AE engagement in pre-screening articles, selecting the review panel, conducting a holistic assessment on how the article can be developed, and managing hiccups in the process.

Teaming of SEs and AEs with *complementary* expertise, enabled by the diversity in expertise on the editorial board, has been effective in processing papers that combine theories and methods in novel ways.

Also, SEs and AEs engage to decide on how to tailor the review process (i.e., whether to pre-screen a paper or conduct a full review, whether a paper in advanced rounds will be sent back to reviewers for assessment on specific aspects or whether development feedback will be provided by the editors).

Article Length: Another notable change that we implemented is an all-inclusive article length limit for each category of article. This establishes reasonableness on the total length of an article to be reviewed by editors and reviewers, and read by scholars.

Excellence of the Board

MISQ's editorial board is *the* key strategic asset for the journal. We pursued initiatives to foster excellence and a shared culture of the board.

Develop shared culture: Active engagement among the board members has been pivotal in developing a shared culture of virtuous reviewing, respecting diversity in IS research, promoting innovative work, and developing work for impact. We discussed issues and opportunities on an ongoing basis, and shared experiences and best practices at editorial board meetings. We also engaged in discussions among editors and participants at *MISQ* workshops for author development, reviewer development, and special issues.

Feedback and recognition: SEs and AEs receive annual reports on their cycle times, broken down by how the paper was processed (e.g., pre-screening, full review) and stages in the review process (e.g., initial submission, first revision). They are also provided the quartile of their cycle times relative to other editors. We also celebrate the excellence of editors. It has given me great joy to recognize the exceptional contributions of our editors, but it has been a particularly challenging activity given the exemplary performance of many!

Cultivate an accomplished and diverse board: We follow an ongoing process to generate a diverse pool of candidates for board appointments. Individuals actively engaged as reviewers and performing well, with established research records, and at stages in their careers to take on editorial roles, are entered into the pool. The pool is enriched with nominations from board members and recommendations from senior colleagues. I made editorial appointments based on need, performance in editorial and reviewing roles, research record, diversity, and detailed conversations that I had with potential SE and AE appointees.

Special Issues

We selectively launched special issues on forward-looking important topics. Each special issue was formulated to attract work on the topic from the breadth of the field. We launched four special issues in the last five years:

- *Role of Information Systems and Analytics in Chronic Disease Prevention and Management*; SE team: Indranil Bardhan, Hsinchun Chen, and Elena Karahanna
- *Next-Generation IS Theories*; SE team: Andrew Burton-Jones, Brian Butler, Susan Scott, and Sean Xin Xu
- *Managing AI*; SE team: Nick Berente, Bin Gu, Jan Recker, and Radhika Santanam
- *Digital Resilience*; SE team: Waifong Boh, Panos Constantinides, Balaji Padmanabhan, and Siva Viswanathan

The team of Senior Editors, as well as the editorial board for each special issue, was comprised of members with diverse expertise in perspectives and methods pertaining to the topic. As is now the norm at *MISQ*, we held workshops to develop papers that advanced past the first round (the workshop for the *Managing AI* Special Issue was held virtually amid the pandemic). We limited the number of full rounds of review to two, with additional rounds involving feedback from the SEs and AEs, and strived to complete the process in 15–18 months.

Broadening Impact

We worked to broaden impact of *MISQ* articles and programs of research through a three-pronged approach: curate *MISQ* articles on major topics, partner with complementary channels to disseminate versions of the work to practitioner audiences, and leverage social media.

Research curations: We launched *MISQ Research Curations* to serve as a go-to source on IS topics of significant interest. A curation includes a short summary of the progression of the work and key themes, along with an infographic and the bundle of *MISQ* articles related to the topic. The curations are accessible from the *MISQ* web site and serve as living documents that are updated as new articles related to the topics are published.⁶

We published 12 curations on the following topics: Securing Digital Assets, Trust, Information Privacy, IS Use, Knowledge Management, Health Information Technology, Information Systems Sourcing, Information Systems Alignment, IT Workforce, IT Project Management, IS Control and Governance, and Online Word-of-Mouth. Another curation on IT-Enabled Collaboration will soon be released. The curation teams represent scholars from different research traditions related to the topic and from different regions of the world.

Providing this one-stop access to programs of research has proven to be very helpful to authors, editors and reviewers. We also found the curations to be valuable for doctoral students and other scholars interested in the topic.

I very much appreciate the collaboration and support of Ashley Bush who served as the Research Curations Editor in implementing this initiative!

Partnerships with complementary channels: Through the relationship that we developed with *MIT–Sloan Management Review (MIT–SMR)*, selected *MISQ* articles were developed into articles for publication in *MIT–SMR*. The arrangement enabled *MISQ* articles to have a broader reach and to impact business executives who are *MIT–SMR*'s primary audience. The initiative served as a proof-of-concept of how we can partner with leading practitioner channels to achieve broader impact on managerial practice and public policy.

My sincere thanks to Jerry Kane who served as the *MISQ–MIT–SMR* liaison and who I enjoyed collaborating with on this innovative initiative!

⁶See the following editorial for details on the *MISQ* Research Curations: Rai, A., and Bush, A. 2018. "Editor's Comments: *MIS Quarterly* Research Curations: Bundling for Impact," *MIS Quarterly* (42:2), pp. iii-vi.

Social media: We implemented a multi-platform strategy to share social media content on *MISQ* articles (e.g., podcast, slide deck, short video, media coverage, or a brief write-up on how authors came up with the idea or story behind the article) and announcements. We are now on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and WeChat, enabling us to connect with people based on their platform preferences. We also implemented a GitHub repository of all *MISQ* social media content that is continually renewed and is searchable.

Many thanks to those who collaborated with me on the social media initiative! Carolina Salge, *MISQ*'s Social Media Coordinator, has done a brilliant job in innovating and improvising as we staged forward with the initiative; Zhitao Yin has effectively managed our presence on WeChat; and Jessica Pye worked with me in the first two years of my term to get the ball rolling.

The IS Replication Project

MISQ partnered with *AIS Transactions on Replications Research* (TRR) to launch the IS Replication Project, with the goal to replicate articles published in *MISQ* and other top IS journals to understand the extent to which IS research is reproducible. The project concluded with 21 replications from a total of 59 different authors representing 29 universities around the world. The profile of the replication studies, analysis, and results comparing the replications to the original studies, and recommendations for replication research are discussed in an *MISQ* editorial,⁷ and the papers are published in *TRR*.

Many thanks to Alan Dennis, Sue Brown, and Taylor Wells for their collaboration on a very important issue!

Developing Authors and Reviewers

We engaged in initiatives to develop authors and reviewers through offering workshops and creating a repository of resources. These workshops are a powerful mechanism for inclusive development of authors and reviewers, and the talent pipeline for editorial roles.

Reviewer Development Workshops: To support *MISQ*'s expectation of virtuous reviewing, we launched the *MISQ* Reviewer Development Workshop in 2016. We offered these workshops alongside ICIS and, this year amid the pandemic, virtually. Participants engage in a series of activities prior to and at the workshop: reading about the principles of virtuous reviewing, developing reviews for a paper that is assigned to them, discussing reviews with fellow participants who reviewed the same paper and with SEs and AEs, and eventually looking at the actual review packet for the paper.⁸

We had 265 participants from 31 countries participate in the reviewer workshops over the last five years. The initiative has expanded the pool of reviewer talent for *MISQ* and the IS community, and created connections between editors and participants for reviewing and mentoring.

Author Development Workshops: Over the last five years, we offered author development workshops at AIS conferences and virtually.

We had 257 participants from 28 countries in the author workshops. From these, we had some first-time *MISQ* authors, and a number of others published their work at other outlets.

The author and reviewer workshops were a team effort. *MISQ* editors enthusiastically served as mentors at the workshops. Yanran Liu provided steadfast support for the workshops that we offered at ICIS and AMCIS. Hong Guo and Bo Sophia Xiao were instrumental in organizing the author workshop at PACIS 2019.

This year, amid the pandemic, we decided to offer each of the workshops in virtual format and in multiple time zones. Susanna Ho and Chee-Wee Tan have been terrific collaborators in improvising to organize these virtual workshops! Yue Cheng and Wei Zhang, our Ph.D. students, provided vital support.

My sincere appreciation to everyone for their contributions to the workshops!

⁷Dennis, A., Brown, S. A., Wells, T., and Rai, A. 2020. "Editor's Comments: Replication Crisis or Replication Reassurance: Results of the IS Replication Project," *MIS Quarterly* (44:3), pp. iii-vii.

⁸The design of the workshop is discussed in: Rai, A. 2019. "Editor's Comments: Developing Virtuous Reviewers," *MIS Quarterly* (43: 4), pp. iii-vii.

Author and reviewer resources: We created repositories of reviewer resources and author resources based on *MISQ* editorials, which can be accessed from the *MISQ* site and the *MISQ* Research Curations site. While a number of excellent editorials for authors and reviewers have been written over the years by *MISQ* editors, these were not easily discoverable, and I noticed that many in the community were unaware of these resources. The repositories bundle these thematically and makes them easily accessible.

The author resources include editorials on formulating research questions, achieving synergies across traditions and perspectives, diversity in IS research, writing and revising articles, and writing Theory and Review articles.

The reviewer resources include editorials on writing virtuous reviews, developing virtuous reviewers, avoiding Type I and Type II errors in reviewing, and adopting a constructive stance to reviewing.

We shared these reviewer and author resources with AIS, and AIS is building on them to develop research resources for the IS community.

Editorials

Editorials are an important mode of communication with the community on issues and initiatives. I used the editorials to share perspectives on issues and opportunities related to IS scholarship vis-à-vis *MISQ*'s strategic positioning as a journal and to share the progress on initiatives to achieve the trifecta vision. For some, I co-opted SEs and AEs and other senior colleagues with diverse expertise and viewpoints related to an issue.

The editorials ranged from virtuous editorial processes (e.g., Writing Virtuous Reviews) to developing and enhancing the scholarly and practical impact of work (e.g., Avoiding Type III Errors, Seeing the Forest for the Trees, Bundling for Impact, Engaged Scholarship) to leveraging the diversity in perspectives and methods (e.g., Leveraging Synergies Between Big Data and Theory, Beyond Outdated Labels, Diversity of Design Science Research, Opportunities and Challenges for Different Types of Online Experiments). Some editorials, which were on emergent issues (e.g., Human–AI Hybrids, The COVID-19 Pandemic: Building Resilience with IS Research), catalyzed special issues such as the one on Digital Resilience.

Many of the editorials have served as a resource for the author and reviewer workshops. They have also promoted dialogue and shared understanding among the editorial board. In addition, they have served as a useful resource to share with potential new appointees to the board and have stimulated conversations with them on effectively managing the editorial process.

Ambassadorial Outreach to IS and Other Scholarly Communities

Over the course of my EIC term, I extensively engaged in outreach to the IS and other scholarly communities. This has involved over 100 keynotes, presentations, and panel discussions. This outreach has been very useful to share the vision and initiatives at *MISQ* with colleagues and to listen and learn from our stakeholders as well as editors and scholars in other disciplines. Many of our editorial board members have also served as ambassadors for the journal by participating in workshops and panels all over the world. These ambassadorial activities played a key role in keeping a pulse on needs and reactions of the community and nurturing the all-essential support from the community.

Welcome to Incoming EIC, Andrew Burton-Jones

I am delighted to welcome Andrew Burton-Jones as the next EIC of *MISQ*! Andrew has consistently excelled as a SE at *MISQ*, exemplifying the qualities that we seek in an editor.

He has accumulated a wealth of editorial experience and deep knowledge of the journal and the global IS community and has an excellent understanding of the diversity of information systems scholarship. I have benefitted greatly from his consistent support and wise counsel during my term as EIC.

He has a powerful vision and a set of initiatives, as well as the talent and passion, to take *MISQ* to new heights. It has been a pleasure to work closely with Andrew over the past few months to achieve a smooth transition!

Editorial Board Changes

Recognizing Retiring Editors

I would like to thank the following individuals who are completing their terms on the editorial board at the end of the year for their valuable service:

- *Senior Editors:* Bin Gu (Boston University), Mark Keil (Georgia State University), Prabhudev Konana (University of Texas at Austin), Jeffrey Parsons (Memorial University of Newfoundland), T. Ravichandran (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute), H. R. Rao (University of Texas at San Antonio), and Amrit Tiwana (University of Georgia)
- *Associate Editors:* Pedro Ferreira (Carnegie Mellon University), Shuk Ying (Susanna) Ho (Australian National University), Hong Guo (University of Notre Dame), Abhay Mishra (Iowa State University), Balaji Padmanabhan (University of South Florida), Jan Recker (University of Cologne), Anjana Susarla (Michigan State University), Juliana Sutanto (Lancaster University), Diane Strong (Worcester Polytechnic Institute), Chuan Hoo Tan (National University of Singapore), Xinlin Tang (Florida State University), and Han Zhang (Georgia Institute of Technology)

My deep appreciation for your significant contributions to *MISQ* and the IS scholarly community!

Welcoming Incoming Editors

I am delighted to welcome the following individuals to the editorial board:

- *Senior Editors:* Peter Gray (University of Virginia), Shuk Ying (Susanna) Ho (Australian National University), Jan Recker (University of Cologne), Balaji Padmanabhan (University of South Florida), Han Zhang (Georgia Institute of Technology), and Eric Monteiro (Norwegian University of Science and Technology)
- *Associate Editors:* Adela Chen (Colorado State University), Sherae Daniel (University of Cincinnati), John Qi Dong (Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin), Brad Greenwood (George Mason University), Ni (Nina) Huang (University of Houston), Thomas Kude (ESSEC), Juhee Kwon (City University of Hong Kong), Kai Larsen (University of Colorado, Boulder), Liangfei Qiu (University of Florida), Israr Quershi (The Australian National University), Nachi Sahoo (Boston University), Maha Shaikh (King's College London), Mari-Klara Stein (Copenhagen Business School), Chong (Alex) Wong (Peking University), and Jing Wang (Hong Kong University of Science and Technology)

I wish the incoming editors the very best—I hope you find the role to be invigorating and fulfilling!

Celebrating the Retirement and Contributions of Jan DeGross

Jan DeGross, *MISQ*'s Managing Editor since 2000, recently announced that she plans to retire in mid-January 2021.

Jan is synonymous with *MISQ* in many ways! Over the last two decades, she has worked with six EICs and countless authors, editors, and reviewers. Jan has moved 89 issues and 891 papers to production—accounting for 57% of the 1,552 papers that have been published in *MISQ*'s 44-year history! She has also been responsible for key administrative aspects such as the web site, contracts, meeting logistics, and much more. Having worked closely with Jan for five years, I have experienced first-hand her extensive contributions to *MISQ* and how she routinely goes above and beyond her designated roles.

On behalf of the *MISQ* community, thank you, Jan, for your invaluable contributions—wishing you a happy retirement, where you find the time to do the things that the call of duty kept you from!

A Vote of Thanks

It has been an honor and privilege to serve as Editor-in-Chief of the *MIS Quarterly* for the past five years.

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to the many individuals who supported me in my role and contributed to the journey that we undertook at *MISQ* in my term as EIC.

The *MISQ* Policy Committee (of 2015) saw promise in the trifecta vision and put their faith in me to take on the EIC role.

The *MISQ* SEs and AEs engaged with a constructive mindset of service to scholarship, which was pivotal to establishing the “can-do, must do” high-performance culture. They provided me with sage counsel to navigate the inevitable issues that accompany the EIC role. The editors, liaisons, and coordinators for the initiatives (curations, social media, author and reviewer workshops, partnerships) were outstanding collaborators in implementing innovative ways to broaden impact, engage with the community, and develop talent in an inclusive manner.

The *MISQ* editorial office provided critical operational support: Jan DeGross, Managing Editor, who I worked with on a range of operational issues and often on weekends and holidays; and Jennifer Syverson followed by Marsha Williams, who served as Review Coordinator and administratively processed the expanding flow of submissions. Alok Gupta, the Publisher, and the Policy Committee served as a sounding board and provided individual and collective counsel and support.

My current and former Ph.D. students who served as editorial assistants for some or all of my term provided exemplary support. Zhitao Yin worked closely with me over my entire term on a multitude of activities with diligence and excellence. Jessica Pye, Yanran Liu, Wei Zhang, and Khaleed Fuad provided vital support for different activities.

Sincere appreciation to the authors who send their best work to *MISQ* and to the reviewers who through virtuous reviewing create significant value in scholarship.

Colleagues and friends across the breadth of the community who engaged in various ways and contributed significantly to the journey—you know who you are, thank you!

Richard Phillips, Dean of the Robinson College, encouraged me to consider the role and provided enthusiastic support over the years. My colleagues in the Center for Digital Innovation and the CIS Department at Georgia State University supported me with their camaraderie and encouragement.

My family has been a source of rock-solid support over these years. After long and sometimes challenging days, they always energized me.

My sincere gratitude to all of you who supported me and contributed to the journey!

I extend my best wishes to Andrew Burton-Jones for a successful term as Editor-in-Chief of the *MIS Quarterly*. I know the journal will grow and prosper under his leadership.

Farewell to the Information Systems Community

It has been my sincere privilege to have worked with so many of you over the past 45+ years. In addition to *MIS Quarterly*, I know many from conference proceedings for IFIP Working Groups, ICIS, and AIS. At one time, I knew almost everyone in the field in the United States, Canada, and Israel when compiling the McGraw-Hill Directories of Information Systems Faculty. I typed many dissertations for Minnesota doctoral students (back in the day before everyone could use a keyboard), and had the pleasure of knowing almost all of them. And yes, Gordon Davis, it has been an incredible adventure.

Jan

