

### **The Editor's Column**

With this issue, we begin our third year of publication. We are a young journal in a rapidly-evolving field. The journal was founded on the motivation to provide an outlet for an exciting new area of study that needed new perspectives and new methods. The founding editor-in-chief, Laku Chidambaram, wrote in his first editorial about three themes that characterize e-services: their ubiquity, integration, and transparency. He argued that e-services represent the next stage in exploitation of the Web and that many questions need to be asked, answered, and raised again, in a spirit of rapid response to an ever-changing landscape.

That original motivation is as strong as ever. Our guest editors for the special section of this issue are eloquent in describing this next chapter of the Internet and the kinds of experiences we might expect. The scenario they present provides a compelling reinforcement of the growth and broad impact of electronic services. The papers included in the special section focus on key issues of customer relationships in e-services and knowledge management in e-marketplaces. We express sincere thanks to the guest editors, Thomas Stafford and Carol Saunders, for their work in developing the special section, and to the authors for their contribution.

The remaining two articles appear in the Practice and Outlook categories. The first of the articles is by Janet Rovenpor and is titled "Explaining the E-Commerce Shakeout: Why Did So Many Internet-Based Businesses Fail?" The article takes a very useful look back at the time period during which this journal was established, and examines the events and practices that contribute to where we are today. The extreme highs and lows of the dot-com era affected us all, and the article's clear and straightforward approach provides key insights on the factors that matter.

The final paper is an Outlook paper by Paul Mulligan and Steven Gordon, titled "Restructuring in Financial Services: A Transaction Cost Perspective." The authors take a close look at continuing change in the financial services industry and provide a perspective on its future. Their insightful combination of theory and practice gives us a useful outlook on this large and important part of the electronic services domain.

As a whole, the papers in this issue reinforce the three themes with which we began. Electronic services are indeed ubiquitous and they are being invented and re-invented every day. Integration of e-services is both difficult and essential, not only from a technological perspective, but from managerial and social perspectives. Transparency and ease of use are increasingly demanded, and the bar for defining these terms rises every day.

As we start this third year, we want to reinforce the broad-ranging domain of the journal. We encourage the examination of e-services from a wide variety of perspectives and levels of analysis, whether individual, team, organizational, inter-organizational, or societal. We also actively invite different methodological perspectives, as part of our goal to present new ideas in new ways. Finally, we encourage potential authors to contact us whenever they have questions about the relevance of their papers for submission.

**Ilze Zigurs**  
**Editor-in-Chief**