

The Editor's Column

The second issue of our fourth volume provides practical perspectives on several important themes of today's electronic world. The first three articles are Practice category papers, which are designed to provide an in-depth view of a current problem or issue and provide insightful analysis for both practitioners and researchers. The fourth paper is an Outlook category paper, a category that addresses emerging trends and potential impacts of new issues.

The first two Practice papers focus on Web-based education and online learning environments. The first article is by A. K. Aggarwal, Veena Adlakha, and Tigineh Mersha and is titled "Continuous Improvement Process in Web-Based Education at a Public University." This article takes the intriguing perspective that we can apply continuous improvement concepts to Web-based education. The authors provide a detailed example of what their own school has accomplished and, by virtue of that detail, provide all of us with real food for thought in terms of our own experience and potential.

The second article is by Chirag Patel and Taran Patel and is titled "Exploring a Joint Model of Conventional and Online Learning Systems." This second article dovetails very nicely with the first one by introducing a model for optimal student learning that integrates both conventional and online approaches. In the process of developing their model, these authors give us many good ideas for how online education affects a broad range of issues, from cognition, to affective response, to managerial issues. The article is both eminently practical and founded in interesting theory.

Ilze Zigurs
Editor-in-Chief