Foreword

The educational potential of distance learning is endless but can only be realized by a cooperative effort of technological and educational experts that is aimed at achieving real and productive innovation. To foster such cooperation and an exchange of ideas, we are holding the second International Conference on eLearning for Knowledge-based Society. Organized by the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology and the Asia-Pacific eLearning Association, the conference has the support of many organizations, including but not limited to the College of Internet Distance Education of Assumption University, Ramkhamhaeng University, Civil Service Commission of Thailand, Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University, Kasetsart University, Mahidol University, TOT Corporation Public Company Limited, Higher Education Commission, Thailand Chapter of the Internet Society, Thailand Chapter of the ACM, Thailand Chapter of the Computer Society of the IEEE, Internet Association, and the Association of Thai Internet Industry. That such an extraordinary collection of institutions, along with equally extraordinary individuals, have come together bodes very well for the future of distance learning.

The face to face interactions that occur at the Conference are very exciting but if the conference is to have a full impact its findings and arguments must be made available to all in the field, whether or not they were able to attend the conference. For this reason the IJCIM is proud to contribute to the effort by providing for the publication of its papers. These proceedings will have an effect not only on those attending but on all those in the future who read accounts of the fascinating ideas and research that are found in the journal.

The scholarly papers from the conference that are included in this issue provide an interdisciplinary overview of the entire field of distance learning. The papers deal with the technological issues, the theory and practice of the educational content of eLearning, the training of professionals who can work effectively in the field, and the development of norms and standards. The conference and this publication will allow professionals and educational policy makers to gain a broad understanding of the entire field while allowing them to make contact with other interested workers, a development that promises to help further accelerate this rapidly changing field. These developments are to be institutionalized by the foundation of a permanent regional eLearning portal.

We at IJCIM and at Assumption University of Thailand are very proud to take part in this important educational endeavor by publishing the “Pre-Conference” proceedings as was done last year. Topics range from general country surveys and broad accounts of pertinent issues and themes to very specific technical papers on problems that need to be solved for the realization of this vital new educational technology. The diversity of articles has resulted once again in an illuminating document that will remain an invaluable reference source in the years when this journal is consulted by the next generation as they continue the effort to promote an ideal community.

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