This issue of the IJCIM provides an excellent mix of both technical articles and those more broadly relating to applications and the larger context of Information Management. It has been said that with the collapse of the dot.com boom, energy has gone out of the field. While it is true that the level of excitement has gone down somewhat, the solid practical work that has always been at the heart of the field continues. It may not be in the spotlight as much as it was several years ago but advances continue to be made and the world continues to be changed by those advances. The wild speculation is gone but as this issue demonstrates the field is far from static.

One area where advances continue to be made is with connectivity. The days when our various devices were connected by ungainly cables will soon be over as the devices in our electronic environments invisibly act together through wireless connectivity. Bluetooth is among the most promising of these new means of achieving connections between devices but if it is to reach its full potential we must gain a fuller understanding of the total ecology of the electronic environment. Settapong Malisuwan, Jakkapol Santiyanon, and Jesada Sivaraks contribute to that understanding in their examination of the effect of mobile phone interference on Bluetooth communications. Their research helps us better be able to consider how our various devices can live in harmony rather than conflict.

Increased connectivity between systems, particularly on the Internet is among the most important of these advances in computer communication. For this to be fully realized the very barriers between the machines need to be broken so that the interaction is not limited to static document transfer and this break down has been partially implemented in java and other applets. This also opens up the possibility of security threats and Ehsan Masud, Md. Mahabubur Rahman and Md.Mehedi Masud consider ways of expanding possibilities of interaction with compromising that security.

If computers are to fully realize their potential they must not simply be at the mercy of programmers but must be provided with the capacity to learn. Neural networks help model such a capacity and in his article Mohd Yusoff Mashor examines a modified recursive prediction error algorithm for facilitating that learning. Bayoumi M.A.H. and El-Feky E.Z. also investigate an algorithm, that basic building block of computer programs. In their case their directed genetic algorithms will be very useful for solving complex problems of linear programming, an important mathematical technique that is useful for finding a wide range of optimal solutions.

Technological advance feeds upon itself and in Khong PohWah’s article is discussed a means for using the internet as a means for exploring previously invented and patented technology, to make certain that efforts are not made to reinvent technologies that already
exist. The problems and applications of information management remain great and an optimum application of limited human and computer resources is critical to success.

The final two articles in this issue examine an economic context of information management within the specific economic situation of Taiwan. The article of Shiaw-Wen Tien, Yi-Chan Chung, Chih-Hung Tsai, and Wen-Chuan Su consider the crucial issue of environmental management and the impact that investment in this area has on Taiwanese industries. Kai-Way Li, Yau-Wen Hsu, and Chih-Hung Tsai consider an important problem with the human-machine interface: the possibility of ergonomic injuries. Without a strong sense of the reality of such industries the full realization of computer technology will be impossible. Having begun this exploration of the contents of this issue with a consideration of machine-machine interaction it is appropriate that we end with an article that explores man-machine interaction.

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