

From the Editor

By Karen V. Beaman, *Jeitosa Group International*



HR departments worldwide are striving to become agile, highly efficient workforce management centers that support global decision-making with critical business intelligence. The effective delivery of HR services, whether in-house or outsourced, must be driven with an eye to bottom-line savings through transformed management practices, streamlined business processing and continuous improvement. This issue focuses on global HR services delivery alternatives and provides case histories and research to aid your decision-making regarding systems, strategies and resources.

Our first article, “Self-Service Evolution in Global Organizations” by Marcia Barkley, Bonnie Correll, Georgi Frye and Alexia Martin of CedarCrestone describes how self-service technologies offer a promise of enhancing HR service delivery, with associated administrative cost savings. In addition, strategic self-service applications can create returns to the organization that ultimately impact shareholder value. A phased approach or an implementation approach focused on addressing a key workforce challenge can be used. Critical to user adoption and return on investment, however, is a change management approach that keeps a consistent overall organization key message, while addressing functional, location, and culture specific requirements.

“Skill Sets for the e-HR World” by Hal G. Gueotal, Janet H. Marler, and Cecilia M. Falbe, of The University at Albany, tell us that as e-HR technology and applications expand and practice continues to change, so must the skill sets required for career success in HR. These new demands on HR staff will result in new HR roles that have a different combination of knowledge and skill requirements. In addition to understanding traditional HR functional processes, new HR roles will require project management, consulting and change management skills. They will also need knowledge of e-HR applications, HRIT management and procurement processes. Few business schools in the U.S. have the faculty, access to e-HR technology and course curriculum to meet organizational demands for these new skill sets, therefore there will be a shortage of qualified HR graduates entering the workplace.

In his article “Thinking Inside the Box: HRO Coming of Age – The Cost of Technology,” Synco Jonkeren of SAP writes that it is hard to understand why there is this huge difference between the process to purchase a human capital management (HCM) system and the process to outsource one or more HCM processes. The author says that the same principal problem needs to be resolved in

both cases – helping improve HCM service delivery through technology. Jonkeren proceeds to examine why this misperception arises and what the real essentials of HRO are. We’ll see that HRO is not simply the purchase of a commodity service, but a partnership that, in order to deliver sustained performance, must rely on sound business foundations, not just contractual clauses.

Next, Kelvin Gray, Workday, presents “Web Services to the Rescue: An Exploration of the Technologies and Business Applications.” Gray’s perspective is that web services are work in progress, and there is still much work to be done. A review will show that there are incomplete web services issues, but they are noted and probably under construction. Some of the issues are critical to the success of web services vision, such as security, quality of service, billing and accounting services and transactional integrity. Still, the industry will not wait for these issues to be completely resolved before moving forward with web services. The industry will begin to agree upon new protocols and standards even before they are ratified, much like was done with the web services technology stack and the adoption of web services will begin to flourish.

We conclude with “Component Architecture and the Technology Marketplace” by John Macy of Competitive Edge Technology who draws a striking analogy between the growth and maturity of the automobile industry and the HRIS software industry. The logical evolution of HRIS software is component assembly and change to the HRIS product marketplace is inevitable. Like every stage of development the automobile industry faced, there will be resistance. The solution is not to introduce blockades to slow progress, but to recognize the nature of change and impact on the HRIS community, and adjust. Change is always difficult, but the trend towards new component-based software design is not an entirely new innovation and should be easy to accept. Component-based software development techniques are used at present; to offer the component products for sale is simply decomposing systems into the micro parts and offering them as assembly objects. The major challenge facing the HRIS software industry is to provide a successful market operation to facilitate the location and purchase of the right software components.

Karen V. Beaman
CEO, *Jeitosa Group International*
San Francisco, CA USA
karen.beaman@jeitosa.com