

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES

IHRIM Journal

June 1999

## **VISIONS OF THE FUTURE: WHAT GOOD IS LAPTOP SYSTEMS WHEN YOU'RE NOT SITTING AT A DESK? . . . . .4**

By Bob Stambaugh

Bob Stambaugh discusses the penetration of PDA's (personal digital assistants) and their use in HR organizations, and has noticed a significant upturn in both areas since the late third quarter of 1998. One interpretation of the trend, validated by a series of interviews in three Fortune 100 firms, is the desire of individual HRIS professionals to have a rudimentary analytical capability that exists outside the overall Y2K vulnerable environment of corporate systems. Another equally plausible explanation is the HRIS "geek factor" – we just love new technology! Yet a third hypothesis revolves around the beginnings of a profound shift in HR business — not just what we do, but how and when we do it. Stambaugh presents several scenarios of how work might be done in HR in 2004. The issues raised concern the role of the HR rep, the cost/value of the company's "human face", the attractiveness of the PDA-based admin function in recruiting, and the potential for knowledge capture through PDA "background" function.

## **ON THE KNOWLEDGE FRONTIER: OWNERSHIP OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT—POINT/COUNTERPOINT . . .6**

By Dr. Scott Tannenbaum

Should a designated person or function be responsible for knowledge management (KM) in your organization? If so, who? In this column, Tannenbaum presents conflicting views for and against establishing KM ownership, and for and against various KM owners. He talks about the different elements of KM ownership (content, technology, and culture) and suggests nine competencies that effective stewards should possess. Arguments can be made for establishing HR, IT, or marketing as the primary function responsible for KM, or for forming a new KM function. Tannenbaum presents these arguments from the perspective of the various functional leaders. He concludes that some form of designated stewardship is probably desir-

able, but it should allow for local content ownership and for cross-functional involvement. There is not a single correct answer regarding ownership. Each organization must assess its needs and the competencies of its various functions to make the most appropriate ownership decision.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES: OUTSIDE THE "COMFORT ZONE" . . . . .11**

By Jenni Lehman

HR organizations are now charged with the goal of enterprise differentiation, forcing successful HR organizations to redefine their role, extend their span of control, and leverage technology. Smart companies are working toward reinventing HR so that it has a direct and positive influence on business performance. These increasing demands are forcing HR outside of a well-established comfort zone. However, the further HR breaks out of its administrative comfort zone into a more activist and strategic role, the more it is finding that there is a serious gap between traditional HR information systems and the solutions that are required to support their new role. Successful organizations are managing this gap using a well-designed HRMS portfolio of core HRMS applications, new technologies, and a select group of targeted solution products.

## **WHAT HR NEEDS TO UNDERSTAND ABOUT THE CHANGING IT WORKFORCE . . . . .16**

By Diane Tunick Morello

The demand for specialized IT skills and know-how is expected to continue to outstrip supply during the next five to ten years; virtually no enterprise can afford to ignore the long-term implications of that prediction on enterprise risk and market competitiveness. The IT workforce, which is at the forefront of systemic change in work, challenges assumptions associated with employee value, performance management, employment models, and enterprise risk. HR organizations, working with CIOs and IT directors, have an opportunity to prepare the enterprise by understanding the IT market, guiding skill management initiatives, and serving as innovators of new ideas rather than enforcers of old policies. In this article, Diane Tunick Morello looks at competitive approaches to finding and keeping talent, the changing role and profile of the IT organization, the bridge between HR organizations and IT organizations, and the result-

ing implications for HR organizations.

## **ENTERPRISE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT: SEIZING THE Y2002 OPPORTUNITY . . . . .22**

By Joel Lapointe

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) investments have been made not only to address the Y2K dilemma, but also to form the information backbone that will enhance enterprise performance in the next millennium. Four Enterprise Performance Management (EPM) initiatives provide the necessary framework for enhanced performance.

The first initiative is Strategic Alignment. This is focused on the "operationalization" of the business unit strategies using Balanced Scorecard methodologies. By combining traditional financial metrics which are "lag indicators" (they tell us where we've been) with other metrics about customers, internal processes and organizational growth/knowledge, (which provide lead indicators), the Balanced Scorecard is a valuable tool for articulating, communicating and individualizing business strategies.

The second key initiative is Process Innovation. Successful process innovation initiatives achieve breakthrough performance impact by strategically leveraging key process enablers. These enablers include business strategy (linked to the Balanced Scorecard), technology, knowledge management, and measurement.

The third component of the EPM framework is Technology Deployment. New technology deployment comes from two major sources. The first is the "phase two" modules that may have been acquired with the original ERP purchase, but were deferred beyond the initial critical implementation effort. The second technology category is that which leverages the "omni-present" e-business phenomenon. Workplace-facing applications like enterprise self service (ESS) and knowledge management, plus market-facing applications like one-to-one marketing or sales force automation hold great promise for significant enterprise performance improvements.

The fourth initiative is People Mobilization. Managing and improving the performance of an enterprise cannot be accomplished without managing and improving the performance of the individuals in the enterprise. Therefore, mobilizing people needs to be an integrated, proactive initiative which ensures the achievement of the other

objectives.

**SECURE FLEXIBILITY IN  
WEB-BASED EMPLOYEE/  
MANAGERIAL SELF-SERVICE . . . . .26**

By Gary L. Durbin

As the shifting HR paradigm sees HR taking on a more strategic role in driving the company's strategic initiatives, the need increases for routine HR processes to be automated. This frees HR to concentrate its efforts on those areas where their value and expertise can make the most impact toward achieving business objectives. With the changing environment and new virtual workforce, self-service solutions are now moving toward Web-based applications to provide better access and scalability. This widespread access, however, brings with it, security concerns that HR professionals must address when deploying self-service throughout their organization. Gary Durbin discusses the changing needs of enterprise HR and how the flexibility of the Web and intelligent Web-based self-service solutions can help deploy secure HR self-service throughout a global enterprise.

**POST-MODERN HR  
SYSTEMS (PART 2) . . . . .30**

By Robert H. Stambaugh

In "Post-Modern Systems, Part 1", Bob Stambaugh discussed a gradual unfolding of new HRIS capabilities, culminating in a new form of system, which he termed "post-modern" because the environment in which it operates goes beyond what vendor systems support with today's "modern" package. In view of this vastly expanded theatre of operations, it is easier to think about these systems not only as bulked-up software and associated processes and procedures, but also as a single component (albeit the dominant one) in an overall HR information environment. This environment extends so far beyond HR and, in fact, beyond the enterprise itself, that we should view it as an "ecology" or ecosystem – a Human Resource Information Ecology (HRIE) – reflecting its complexity and interconnectivity with other people and systems.

If we develop this model and add a framework that allows us to create strategic analyses and responses in today's global business network, we can become a truly strategic segment of HR and a world class asset to the corporation for years to come. If we do not, our empty talk about alignment, ROI (return on investment), and peer part-

nerships will not help us at all. Other business areas will sense the vacuum that exists where we have failed to manage, and "they" will run "us" ... right out of our own business. So we need to combine our systems management experience with HRIE concepts and create a new and strategic approach to managing the newly emerging (or post-modern) HRIS. We stand to reap multiple benefits from our involvement.

In this second article of the series, Stambaugh discusses how to scan the complex environments you confront today and will confront in the future and to help you uncover some of the prerequisites to being effective in the role of HRIS manager. He also introduces a framework for evaluating ahead of time what you, as an HRIS manager, can do to influence the future – to predict when and where to introduce and advocate new capabilities, not just in HR, but throughout the enterprise.

**International Perspective: North America  
TOTAL STRATEGIC OUTSOURCING . . . . .49**

By Carl C. Hoffmann, PhD.

HR is experiencing rising levels of outsourcing. Increasingly, organizations are outsourcing services such as outplacement, training, pension management, and information technology. By partnering with vendors who excel in the services they provide, internal HR departments can gain substantial benefits including reduced costs, strategic advantage, higher quality, the ability to achieve organizational change, and improved customer satisfaction. Additionally, the burden to stay technologically current is shifted to the outsource provider. However, outsourcing may be accompanied by a variety of problems. The organization may feel that it is losing control over its employees and its data, or may feel that the costs of full-service strategic outsourcing outweigh the potential benefits. It is important that both organization and vendor understand the terms of the outsourcing partnership. This article describes the outsourcing trend and offers advice regarding the types of organizations that can benefit from outsourcing and how vendors should be chosen.

**International Perspective: Western Europe  
THE YEAR OF THE EUROPEAN  
INTERNET . . . . .54**

By Paul English

The number of European users totaled 36 million last year, or almost 25% of world-

wide users. While 1998 was an exciting year for the European Net, in the final analysis, it came short of being the watershed we had hoped for. Despite heavy gains in Germany and the UK – and moderate gains elsewhere – Internet usage levels did not reach the critical mass necessary to make the Net a part of daily life in most countries. While Internet usage in Europe is lagging behind the U.S. in acceptance and use as a means of everyday work, it is clear that the Internet in Europe is becoming a force to be reckoned with. Europeans are no longer ignoring the web society that is surrounding them. The time is ripe for new products and services that exploit the new technologies. The old adage, "If you build it, they will come," can certainly be applied to the European Internet situation today.

**International Perspective: Central  
and Eastern Europe  
THE HR MANAGER'S HOME PAGE:  
"HR INFO CENTER" . . . . .57**

By Gabor Erdi

HR managers in Central and Eastern Europe do not yet appreciate the Internet. However, their Internet access is not completely non-existent, since their children cannot wait until the weekend when Daddy brings the company notebook home and connects it to the Web. Then, Mom gets upset because the children suddenly become deaf and impossible to handle, and the visit to grandma's house is cancelled. So, what would it take to make HR people similarly addicted? This challenge involves several factors, but the first and most important step is to support the HR community in helping them find the information they need easily, quickly and in a user-friendly manner. This objective can be realized by setting up a web site with the mission of integrating chaotically spread HR information on the Internet. This web site, which I have named *HR Info Center*, guides the HR professional in the shortest possible way to the required sources, helping to make the Internet more widely accepted in Central and Eastern Europe. The article presents some ideas on setting up an attractive "integrator" site for the HR community.

**International Perspective: Asia Pacific  
THE IMPACT ON ASIA OF ERP DRIVEN  
GLOBAL SOLUTIONS . . . . .60**

By John Macy

The current trend to implement Enter-

prise Resource Planning (ERP) solutions has resulted in a renewed emphasis on Global HRIS initiatives. The complexity associated with trying to adapt a corporately selected product to a global operation introduces some very difficult systems issues, particularly for Asia. This article examines some of the issues relating to the suitability to Asia of functionality required corporately, and the higher importance placed on some of the "marginal" HRIS modules. Additionally, some of the issues associated with vendor commitment locally to product support when they have not been involved in the selling process are discussed. The article also mentions the economics associated with solving the problems of the functional gap and suggests that Asia will be a beneficiary of the new trend towards component development that will expand the range of options open to companies not wishing to embark on extensive product customisation.

**International Perspective: Africa  
WORKPLACE DEMOCRACY  
IN AFRICA . . . . .62**

By Phillip Booth

Within Africa, workplace democracy takes on a wider role, reflecting the broader political framework. It is critical that both management and workers realise the value and benefit of open access to information within the workplace, enabling staff to make effective decisions for the benefit of the business, in turn benefiting themselves as stakeholders. Technology is proving to be a valuable tool in this process. Booth looks at the African workplace and discusses how a participative framework can benefit both business and staff.

**Working in the Connected World:  
MANAGING CONNECTED  
ASSETS . . . . .64**

By Valdis Krebs

Recent research on productivity and effectiveness in the knowledge economy provides insight into what works in the connected workplace. Certain patterns of connections were found around effective individuals and successful teams when performing knowledge work. Other research reveals how "missing links" can change a poor economic network into a better conduit for information, influence, and knowledge.

Human resource (HR) professionals in the past focused solely on the individual and recently on collections of individuals called

teams. The economics of networks has no place for unconnected objects whether they are individuals, teams or systems. In the connected economy we can no longer focus on individual or single team performance. HR professionals must adopt a "whole systems" mode of thinking and analysis if they are to be effective in improving the effectiveness of their complex human systems.

Krebs explores how new research into human networks can be applied by HR professionals working in a knowledge environment.

**HRIS Legal Update: United States  
WITHHOLDING FROM  
EMPLOYEE WAGES . . . . .68**

By Edward Lee Isler, Esq.

Where an employee has engaged in conduct that has resulted in loss to the employer, employers often are tempted to resort to self-help by taking deductions from employee wages. Human resource professionals and payroll administrators should be aware, however, that such deductions are governed by state law in the United States, with most states imposing some form of prohibition on such practices. In some states, deductions from wages, even with employee consent, can be made only for certain prescribed purposes. Other states permit a broader range of grounds for the withholding, but those states generally require that the employee has consented first in writing to such deductions. This article attempts to summarize the general law of the various states on these issues while reminding human resource and payroll professionals to check the applicable state law before engaging in any such withholding from employee pay.

**HRIS Legal Update: Europe  
WORKSTATION ERGONOMICS . . . . .70**

By Phil Jones

Safety and health in the workplace is a responsibility shared by employee and employer alike, and can be vital to long-term business performance. But, within member states of the European Union, there are quite clear legal obligations imposed on employers. This article explores some of the health and safety requirements associated with the use of display screen equipment, or VDUs as they are often called. It discusses both the issues that an employer must consider, and the legal rights granted to all workstation users. The issues are wide-ranging, and touch upon risk assessment, eye-

sight tests, user training, office furniture, the work environment and daily work routines. Some of the obligations are quite specific, while others are expressed in more general terms, and so regulations may vary between member states. But, because each member state has to make a progress report to the European Commission every four years, the topic is not going to go away.

**HRIS Case Study:  
EUROPE CAUTION:  
BPO CROSSING AHEAD! . . . . .72**

By Robert H. Stambaugh

In this case study, help Carrie Wellman, Director of HR and Payroll systems for Moonshine Industries determine the best approach for her company in its evaluation of the pros and cons of business process outsourcing (BPO). Should she be an all-out advocate of the new process? Should she appear to support it for the time being, but hedge her bets – internally and outside the company as well? Should she oppose the idea and hope it could be killed or severely wounded before upper management even got wind of the possibility? What kind of ROI arguments could you make for BPO? How well do you understand BPO and the issues involved at the moment? What can you do to be prepared when this approach to efficiency comes to your company? What can you request of your management to make your environment a better place for HRIS? Listen to the opinions of our panel of experts and send us your own opinion too.

**BOOK REVIEWS . . . . .75**

By Sharon Lampton

*The Human Equation* by Jeffrey Pfeffer recounts how companies can achieve better bottom-line results by treating their employees with respect. It has many practical suggestions, and will make you feel good as you read it. *Good Company* by Hal F. Rosenbluth and Diane McFerrin Peters is a wonderful book about how an established company re-invented itself to take advantage of a changing environment, and is now poised to take advantage of future changes. *Distance Training*, edited by Deborah A. Schreiber and Zane L. Berge, is a collection of case studies about companies who have implemented some form of distance training (i.e., training that does not assume the physical proximity of instructor and student). It's a must-read for anyone who is undertaking a distance learning project.

## IHRIM JOURNAL STAFF

**KAREN V. BEAMAN** is Vice President of European Operations for AG Consulting, a wholly-owned subsidiary of ADP, Inc., providing management and IT consulting services for human resources and finance. She has 20 years of experience with information systems and human resource management, the last 17 of which have been specifically in the development, implementation, integration, and management of enterprise-wide HR software. Beaman has been responsible for all aspects of AG's business, including business strategy and development, sales and marketing, products and services development, client delivery and customer satisfaction, consultant administration, recruiting, hiring, training, and staffing. She has degrees from Old Dominion and Georgetown Universities and has completed all coursework and examinations for the Ph.D. in Sociolinguistics and Historical and Computational Linguistics. She is an internationally recognized speaker and has published works in the fields of both Linguistics and HRIS. She is currently the Editor-in-Chief of the *IHRIM Journal* and Chair of the *IHRIM.link* Magazine Editorial Committee and a member of the IHRIM Board of Directors. She can be reached at [kBeaman@agconsult.com](mailto:kBeaman@agconsult.com).

**BRIAN KIMBALL** is Vice President of Sales for Intellect Systems, Inc., a leading Canadian-based firm that specializes in the development of human resources and payroll management systems. He has over seven years direct involvement in the development, sales and implementation of human resources and payroll management systems solutions. Kimball has been an active member in the International Association for Human Resource Information Management (IHRIM) since its inception. He frequently speaks at conferences, including IHRIM, CHRSP, and other industry-related venues, on the implications of technology as it pertains to HRMS. He has published several articles on HRMS-related issues in industry publications including the *IHRIM Journal* "Invisible Asset Management," (March 1998). In addition to his writing and speaking activities, Kimball has five years editorial experience. This includes his previous work as editor for the *CHRSP Resource* and his

current role as International Editor for the *IHRIM.link*. He can be reached at [bkimball@hrintellect.com](mailto:bkimball@hrintellect.com)

**DR. LISA MARIE PLANTAMURA** is Associate Director of Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation, East Hanover, New Jersey, and has over 20 years experience in the design, development, implementation, and management of HR information systems. Previously she was the Manager of HR Systems for General Public Utilities Corporation and a Systems Manager for Merrill Lynch & Company. A founding member of the Human Resources Information Management Society (HRIMS), Plantamura served two terms as its President, and is currently a Director. She served as both Editorial and Professional Development Director of the International Association for Human Resource Information Management (IHRIM) and was a recipient of their Summit Award in 1995. Plantamura is an instructor for IHRIM courses and an adjunct college instructor in both systems analysis and HRIS. She is a frequent workshop presenter and has published several articles on topics relating to HR information systems. She holds an MBA in Personnel Administration and a Ph.D. in Adult Education. She can be reached at [lisa.plantamura@pharma.novartis.com](mailto:lisa.plantamura@pharma.novartis.com).

## EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

**DR. THOMAS H. DAVENPORT** is the Curtis Mathes Fellowship Professor and Director of the Information Management Program at the University of Texas at Austin. Davenport wrote the first article on re-engineering and the first book - *Process Innovation: Re-engineering Work Through Information Technology* (Harvard University Press, 1993). His articles have appeared in the *Harvard Business Review*, *Sloan Management Review*, and he is a regular columnist in *CIO* and *Information Week* magazines. His recent research has established milestone perspectives on the issues of knowledge management and business process. His most recent works on the subject are *Information Ecology: Mastering the Information and Knowledge Environment* (University Press, May 1997) and *Working Knowledge: Managing What Your Organization Knows* (Harvard University Press, October 1997). Davenport also writes a monthly column created expressly

for him by *CIO* magazine called "Think Tank", and is one of the founding editors of *Knowledge Inc.* He can be reached at [davenport@mail.utexas.edu](mailto:davenport@mail.utexas.edu).

**GARY L. DURBIN** is chairman, founder, and chief technology officer of Seeker Software, a leading provider of prepackaged workplace Web applications that automate everyday HR business transactions. Durbin, an executive with a successful track record of building innovative software, started Tesseract Corporation and built it into a US\$30 million human resources application software company widely known for technically advanced, quality products. After the sale of Tesseract to Ceridian Corporation, Durbin led several projects that developed parallel and distributed processing applications. Durbin also founded Cybernetic Development, Inc., a company that designed successful commercial software products, later acquired by Boole and Babbage. He has delivered Web-based self-service presentations at several human resource industry events, including national and local chapter IHRIM conferences, Tesseract User Group conferences, and the West Coast Human Resource Conference. He can be reached at [gldurbin@seekersoft.com](mailto:gldurbin@seekersoft.com).

**ROW HENSON** is the Vice President of HRMS Product Strategy at PeopleSoft where she is responsible for the HRMS product line. Her prior experience includes 15 years in the computer software industry with Dun & Bradstreet Software and Cullinet (now part of Computer Associates) where she was primarily focused on sales, support, and development of human resource systems. Henson was voted one of the "Top 10 Women in Technology" by *Computer Currents*. She has been a frequent speaker at HR industry association meetings, including IHRIM, AMR International, IQPC, SHRM, APA, IIR, ASPM, and HRMS Expo. Additionally, she has been published in numerous personnel and software periodicals such as *Personnel Journal*, *Software Magazine*, *HR Executive*, and *Benefits & Compensation Solutions*. Prior to working in the HR software world, Henson was a Director of Personnel for seven years with a non-profit health agency. She has a bachelor's degree in Business Administration, with an emphasis in Management and Insurance from the University of Georgia. She can be reached at [row\\_henson@peoplesoft.com](mailto:row_henson@peoplesoft.com).

**DR. MICHAEL J. KAVANAGH** is a Professor of Management and Psychology at the University of Albany where he serves as Director of the Ph.D. program in Organizational Studies and developed the M.B.A. specialization in HRIS. Kavanaugh received his Ph.D. in Industrial Psychology from Iowa State University and is a licensed psychologist. He is a Fellow of the American Psychological Society and the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology. He is a past editor of *Group & Organizational Management*, and he has published over 175 papers and articles in the fields of management and industrial psychology. His major fields of teaching and research are HRM and HRIS, performance appraisal, training, occupational classification systems, implementation of new technology and international HR management. He can be reached at [BigMickAlbany@postoffice.worldnet.att.net](mailto:BigMickAlbany@postoffice.worldnet.att.net).

**DR. NANCY PAULE MELONE** is an Associate Professor of Management and Systems at the University of Oregon where she teaches HRIM/HRIS and studies theoretical and applied issues in the design, management and use of information and information technologies. She was previously on the faculty at Carnegie Mellon where she helped craft the interdisciplinary Masters Program in Software Engineering. Melone's industrial experience includes professional positions in the financial and technology industries in human-computer interaction, strategic planning, and research and planning. Acting on her view that business school faculty should move frequently between academia and industry, she will soon join Management Science Associates, Inc. Melone earned her Ph.D. in Information Systems and an M.B.A. in Operations Management from the University of Minnesota where she held an IBM Fellowship and was affiliated with the Center for Research in Human Learning. She also has a master's degree in Industrial Relations from the University of Iowa where she held a fellowship with the Center for Labor and Management. She can be reached at [nmelone@msa.com](mailto:nmelone@msa.com)

**VINNIE MIRCHANDANI** is a Research Director in the Business Applications Area for The Gartner Group, Inc. the world's leading independent advisor of research and analysis of IT industry developments and trends as well as the packaging and distribution of such analysis into subscription-based products to

business professionals making IT decisions, including users, purchasers, and vendors of IT products and services. His main focus is on financial, human resources, procurement, and order fulfillment processes and systems, and he also oversees package implementation service providers and software project planning issues. Mirchandani has more than 15 years of experience evaluating and implementing enterprise application software across multiple hardware platforms in the U.S. and Europe. Prior to joining The Gartner Group, Mirchandani was a director of application software market analysis and support for Price Waterhouse. He holds an M.B.A. from Texas Christian University and is a CPA. He speaks extensively at software industry forums, is widely quoted in industry publications. He can be reached at [vinnie.mirchandani@gartner.com](mailto:vinnie.mirchandani@gartner.com).

**DR. MARGI OLSON** is General Manager, knowledge-based systems for Lend Lease Corporation. In this role, she is responsible for defining the company's global knowledge strategy framework. In addition, she works with the business unit CIOs to initiate, implement and share knowledge management initiatives. Prior to joining Lend Lease, Olson spent nine years in management consulting, specializing in business process re-engineering and knowledge management. Most recently, she had global responsibility for defining and bringing to market knowledge management solutions for Lotus Development Corporation. Olson migrated to Australia in 1990 from the U.S. Prior to that, she was a professor at the NYU where she taught MBA students and did research on information technology and organizational change. Olson has a Ph.D. in Business, specializing in Information Systems, from the University of Minnesota. She can be reached at [Margi\\_Olson@lendlease.com.au](mailto:Margi_Olson@lendlease.com.au).

**JIM SPOOR** is the Founder and President of SPECTRUM Human Resource Systems Corporation, a Denver, Colorado-based provider of software for use in human resource management, benefits administration, and training and development. Prior to forming SPECTRUM in 1984, Spoor's previous responsibilities included a 25-year career in both HR and line management with various Fortune 500 corporations. His experience also includes over 15 years of executive-level responsibility for global HR opera-

tions. Spoor has earned a reputation as an innovator who focuses primarily on addressing strategic organizational business issues. He has a B.S. in Industrial Psychology from the University of Illinois. Spoor has authored a number of articles, been a contributing author to several professional handbooks and textbooks, and has been a regular speaker and panelist on such topics as HR and HR systems, entrepreneurship, and emerging trends in technology. He can be reached at [jspoor@spectrum.hr.com](mailto:jspoor@spectrum.hr.com).

**ROBERT H. STAMBAUGH** is President of Kapa'a Associates, a Hawaii-based consulting firm which specializes in using information technology to improve organizational effectiveness. He has over 25 years of HR and IT experience. Before founding Kapa'a Associates in 1993, he was associated with The Hunter Group, VRC Consulting Group, Atari and Intel Corporation. Stambaugh was a co-founder of HRSP, IHRIM's predecessor organization and is IHRIM's immediate past-President. He is the author of more than 35 HRIS articles and is a frequent speaker about the discipline's current and future challenges and direction. He can be reached at [stambaugh-kapaa@worldnet.att.net](mailto:stambaugh-kapaa@worldnet.att.net).

**JAY F. STRIGHT** is the Executive Director of Management Consulting for AG Consulting, a wholly-owned subsidiary of ADP, Inc., where he is responsible for assisting Human Resources and Finance executives to take advantage of opportunities rising from the implementation of new application software to employ business process automation to increase the alignment of organizational structures and processes to enterprise business objectives. Stright has over 30 years of experience in management, integration, and human resources. Prior to joining AG, he worked for Chevron where he integrated HR processes, technology, and structures to increase leverage with Chevron's core business. Stright is a recognized expert in strategic human organization issues, the use of technology in HR, the application of benchmarking to HR processes, and balancing the cost and value of HR products and services to the business objectives of the enterprise. He is an executive guest lecturer and adjunct instructor at several colleges and universities and a provider of professional seminars. He has been a national officer and board member of HRSP (now IHRIM), was a founding board member of the Human Re-

sources Technology Forum. He can be reached at [JStright@agconsult.com](mailto:JStright@agconsult.com).

**DR. JOHN SULLIVAN** is head of the Human Management Program in the College of Business at San Francisco State University. He is a well-known international speaker, author and advisor to Fortune 500 and Silicon Valley firms. He specializes in making HR "THE" competitive advantage. He is also head of the HR Strategic Forecasting Project, whose goal is to forecast and anticipate HR issues and opportunities. He can be reached at [JohnS@sfsu.edu](mailto:JohnS@sfsu.edu)

**DR. SCOTT I. TANNENBAUM** is President of the Executive Consulting Group, Inc. (ECG). Throughout his career, he has consulted to numerous organizations, supporting their efforts to effectively lead people, facilitate change, and manage knowledge. A few of the clients he has supported include: Johnson & Johnson, Tiffany & Co., GE Capital, Bergdorf-Goodman, American Express, the U.S. Navy and Air Force, Citicorp, and Swiss Bank. Dr. Tannenbaum publishes and presents extensively on HR, IT, OD, and knowledge-management topics. He has reviewed for over 15 professional journals and co-authored one of the first university-level texts on HRIS. His research on HR-related topics has won awards from the National Academy of Management and the American Society of Training and Development. He has a Ph.D. in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from Old Dominion University and maintains a part-time faculty position as a tenured professor in the School of Business at the State University of New York at Albany. Currently, he and ECG are working on several innovative projects in the field of knowledge management. He can be reached at [Scott.Tannenbaum@ecgweb.com](mailto:Scott.Tannenbaum@ecgweb.com).

**KLAUS TSCHIRA** is a Supervisory Board Member of SAP AG in Walldorf, Germany, a company he co-founded in 1972. Prior to SAP, he was a systems engineer at IBM in Mannheim, Germany. With over 30 years of IT experience, including 15 years of human resource system development, consulting, marketing and international sales, Tschira is the member of the board responsible for human resource product development. Tschira studied physics in Karlsruhe, Germany and received an honorary Ph.D. from the University of Klagenfurt, Austria. He has been a member of HRSP since 1991 and has

spoken at numerous conferences and events. He can be reached at [Klaus.Tschira@kts.villa-bosch.de](mailto:Klaus.Tschira@kts.villa-bosch.de).

**DR. DAVID ULRICH** is a Professor of Business Administration at the University of Michigan where he is the Co-Director of the university's Advanced Human Resource Executive Program. He has generated an award-winning national database on organizations which assesses how strategies match HR practices for improved financial performance and HR competencies. He has published over 80 articles and book chapters and is the author of *Human Resource Champions: The Next Agenda for Adding Value and Delivery Results*. He is the editor of *Human Resource Management*, serves on the editorial board of five other journals, and writes a monthly column for *Human Resource Executive*. He is a Fellow in the National Academy of Human Resources, is a co-founder of the Michigan Human Resource Partnership which was listed by *Business Week* as one of the world's "Top 10 Educations" in management. Ulrich received the Pericles Pro Meritus Award for outstanding contributions to the HR field and has consulted and done research with over half of the Fortune 200. He can be reached at [dou@umich.edu](mailto:dou@umich.edu).

**JUAN VILA** is the Vice Chairman of the Board for Meta4, a company he co-founded in Madrid in 1991 that currently has offices in Atlanta, Paris, Munich, Barcelona, Mexico, Buenos Aires and Santiago. Apart from developing and implementing their own software products, Meta4 is the HR solution partner for Baan. Vila has 18 years of HR experience and has worked as a training manager for CASA (a partner of Airbus), an internal consultant for Digital Equipment Corporation, and as an HR Director for Andersen Consulting. He has been published in *Computerworld*, *PC Week*, and *Expansión*. Vila has a bachelor's degree in Psychology and a certificate in Industrial Psychology from the University of Madrid. He can be reached at [juanv@meta4.es](mailto:juanv@meta4.es).

**ALFRED J. WALKER** is a Senior Fellow in the Parsippany, New Jersey office of Towers Perrin. He is the global thought leader and leading technologist of the firm's HR Transformation and Technology practice which specializes in the application of computer-based technology to HR and management functions. Some of his clients include

Aetna, Citibank, IBM, Lucent Technologies, Motorola, Raytheon and Sears Roebuck. Before joining Towers Perrin in 1984, Walker directed the HR systems operations at AT&T for 17 years. He is a well-known author and lecturer, a founder and board member of IHRIM and the Human Resources Planning Society, and is an adjunct university professor. Walker's textbook, *HRIS Development*, is considered the seminal text in the HR systems field. His second book, *Handbook of HRIS: Reshaping The HR Function With Technology*, has been widely acknowledged for setting the vision for technology-based HR functions. He has a B.S. from Fordham University, an M.B.A. in Economics from Seton Hall. In 1994, he was given a Summit Award by IHRIM for lifetime achievement to the HR systems field. He can be reached at [walkeaj@towers.com](mailto:walkeaj@towers.com).

## INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENTS

### AFRICAN CORRESPONDENT

**PHILLIP BOOTH** has worked on a number of HR and payroll packages within Southern Africa, ranging from mainframe systems to client/server-based applications. He comes from a functional HR background within The Anglo American Corporation, one of Southern Africa's largest corporations, where he moved into the HR systems arena in 1993. He was appointed to SAP Southern Africa in 1994 as a consultant, specialising in the implementation of personnel development and planning functionality and the integrated SAP R/3 HRIS. He was appointed Product Manager for Human Resources for SAP Southern Africa in 1996 and has responsibility for all sub-Saharan operations. In this capacity, he addresses audiences on a variety of HR related topics, from the changing role of HR in people management to systems support for strategic people management throughout Africa. He is a member of the Institute of People Management and holds a variety of qualifications in the HR field. He can be reached at [phillip.booth@sap-ag.de](mailto:phillip.booth@sap-ag.de).

### ASIA PACIFIC CORRESPONDENT

**JOHN MACY** is the Principal HR Consultant and Managing Director of Competitive Edge

Technology, an Australian-based consulting business specialising in HRIS. He has over 30 years of experience in HR as both a practitioner and HRIS professional, most of which has been spent with Qantas Airways where he managed the implementation of a worldwide HR system. Macy writes a regular column on current HRIS issues for the Australian Human Resource Institute's HR *Monthly* magazine and has had numerous articles published in Australia and the U.S. He is a member of the IHRIM.*link* Editorial Committee and IHRIM's Global SIG. He is also the Chairperson of an Australian standards committee tasked with developing an information exchange standard for personal and organizational data. Macy has spoken at many conferences in Asia, Australia, New Zealand and the U.S. on HRIS technology subjects. He can be reached at [CET7@Compuserve.com](mailto:CET7@Compuserve.com).

#### CANADIAN CORRESPONDENT

**AL DORAN, CHRP**, is the President of Phenix Management International, a Toronto-based management consulting firm specializing in the effective use of technology in the management of human resource information. Most recently, Doran was the Director of Human Resources Management Information and Payroll at York University in Toronto. He has over 25 years of experience in information systems with particular emphasis in personnel, payroll, and human resource planning functions. In 1996, he received the Summit Award, the highest award of recognition by IHRIM. Doran is the co-author of an HRMS book and is a frequent columnist for many industry publications. He was President of the Canadian Association of Human Resource Systems Professionals (CHRSP), Vice President of the Greater Toronto Chapter of the IHRIM, and Chair of the Higher Education Special Interest Group (HESIG) of IHRIM. He can be reached at [aldoran@pmihrm.com](mailto:aldoran@pmihrm.com).

#### EASTERN EUROPE CORRESPONDENT

**GABOR ERDI** is presently an HR consultant at SAP Hungary. Prior to joining SAP Erdi was the HR Director at the Hungarian subsidiary of Tetra Pak, the Swedish packaging technology company. He spent also several years working as a general HR consultant affiliated with major multinational organizations operating in Central and Eastern Europe. In addition to his Eastern European experience, he worked in the U.S. for two

years at Rich Products Corp. His major interest and specialty is in introducing HRIS in the newly emerging markets of Central and Eastern Europe. He is the founder of the Hungarian HR Managers Club and holds a masters degree in Business Administration and International Trade. He can be reached at [gabor.erdi@sap-ag.de](mailto:gabor.erdi@sap-ag.de).

#### UNITED STATES CORRESPONDENT

**DR. CARL C. HOFFMANN** is President of Hoffmann Research Associates, a research and consulting firm he founded in 1978 in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. With more than 20 years of experience in the fields of systems development, statistical analysis, and business process redesign, he is recognized as an expert in the area of human resource information systems. Hoffmann provides consultation services for corporate executives, HR planners and HR information managers on a wide range of workforce planning issues, including job analysis, employee selection and development, competency and performance management, and compensation. He specializes in the design, development, and strategic use of knowledge-based reporting systems tailored to individual organizational requirements and environments. Hoffman received his master's and doctorate degrees in Sociology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Hoffmann also has extensive experience in providing litigation support services related to employment practices, labor arbitration, and corporate ethics. He can be reached at [hoffmann@hoffmannresearch.com](mailto:hoffmann@hoffmannresearch.com).

## CONTRIBUTING COLUMNISTS

**EDWARD LEE ISLER** is a Partner with the law firm of Ray & Isler, P.C. in Vienna, Virginia, a firm dedicated exclusively to the representation of management in all aspects of labor, employment, and employee benefits law. He graduated in 1983 from the University of Virginia with a BA in Government and Economics. In 1987, he graduated from the College of William & Mary, Marshall-Wythe School of Law, where he served as a member of the Board of Editors of the William and Mary Law Review and was inducted into the Order of the Coif. Prior to beginning private prac-

tice, Mr. Isler served as judicial clerk to the Honorable James C. Turk, Chief Judge for the United States District Court, Western District of Virginia. Previously, he spent seven years practicing labor, employment, and employee benefits law in Washington, D.C. with a national firm and two years with a regional firm. Isler is a member of the Virginia and the District of Columbia Bars. He can be reached at [eisler@erols.com](mailto:eisler@erols.com).

**PHIL JONES** is an HR Systems Manager with British Airways in London. With 25 years experience in the airline industry, he has specialised in the business application of computer systems. During this time, he has held training seminars in Europe, the USA, India, and the Far East, and has spoken on HRIS topics at several international conferences. In recent years, he has helped design and implement a corporate HRIS for British Airways, and provided world-wide consultancy support on a range of associated issues. He is a member of British Mensa, and holds degrees from three British universities - a bachelors degree in Physics, and masters degrees in Operational Research and in European Employment & Management Law. He is co-author of a university-level text book on legal aspects of employment policy within the European Union. He can be reached at [philip.g.jones@british-airways.com](mailto:philip.g.jones@british-airways.com)

**VALDIS KREBS** is an organizational consultant and the author of InflowTM, a software-based social systems analysis methodology that maps and measures knowledge exchange, information flow, informal networks, communities of practice and emergent groups within and between organizations. Krebs is a collaborative researcher with Ernst & Young's Center for Business Innovation and has degrees in Mathematics, Computer Science and Human Resources. He can be reached at [valdis@orgnet.com](mailto:valdis@orgnet.com).

**SHARON LAMPTON** is an independent consultant who has been working in HRIS for 25 years. She has presented at both national and local conferences, for both IHRIM and various software vendors, and has written articles in several publications. She was a founding member of IHRIM, was the first president of the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter, and was on the San Francisco board from 1989 to 1997, acting as Program

Chair, Vice President, President, and Financial Officer. She can be reached at **Slamp-ton@pacbell.net**.

## AUTHORS' GUIDELINES

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#### FOOTNOTES:

##### Books

- 1 Robert K. Wysocki, Robert Beck, Jr., and David B. Crane, *Effective Project Management* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1995), p. 10.

##### Magazine Articles

- 2 John Kelly, "Distance Education: Closer Than You Think!" *IHRIM.link*, February/March 1999, pp. 14-22.

##### Journal Articles

- 3 Robert H. Stambaugh, "Cones of Silence: The HR Systems 'Body of Knowledge' and the Real HRIS Ecosystem," *IHRIM Journal*, vol. 2, no. 2, 1998, pp. 22-29.

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##### Books

Wysocki, Robert K., Robert Beck, Jr., and David B. Crane. *Effective Project Management*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1995.

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