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**T**his is my first issue as the guest editor of this magazine. I first got involved with the editorial committee of the *IHRIM.link* during the summer of 2007, after Lexy Martin recommended that I volunteer as a committee member. I worked for the Hackett Group at the time and I was looking for ways to get more involved in IHRIM. Since then I've changed companies/jobs and spent many spare hours working to make the *IHRIM.link* the best that it can be.....or at least meet the high expectations of my fellow committee members. Hopefully you will find this issue to be interesting, educational, and timely. The general theme revolves around service delivery and related sourcing strategies, which are some of my favorite topics.

In our first feature, Lowell Williams of EquaTerra provides a current status of the HRO marketplace. He talks about the impact of the economic slowdown on HRO providers and their marketing strategies. He also talks about how many HRO providers are retrenching to improve their service quality and profitability. And lastly, he provides some guidance to those who may be looking at HR outsourcing today.

Our next feature article was written by John Cooper and Cheri Brown of the Hackett Group. In their article, John and Cheri discuss how organizations are leveraging offshoring and outsourcing to globalize their service delivery models. There does appear to be some clear decision criteria and maturization steps that everyone should be aware of.

Next, Rosemary Collins of TPI discusses the

formidable obstacles to the transformation of HR and focuses on the ways to win executive support before selecting, preparing and training the retained team to meet or exceed post-transformation business goals. Using real-world examples of successful HR transformations, the article explores the steps organizations should take before and after outsourcing to increase the likelihood of a successful HR organizational transformation.

Futurestep's Wendy Wick and Dave Marzo then provide a focused look at recruitment process outsourcing (RPO). In their article Wendy and Dave lay out the reasons for RPO and how to do it, including vendor selection.

Sybil Mack of Lexmark International, Inc., one of my former colleagues/employees provides an insider's view of outsourcing and globalization from her direct experiences with full blown domestic outsourcing, offshoring with an existing outsourcer, and the migration of processes to a centralized service center in the Philippines.

In our last feature, Gianni Giacomelli with SAP describes how HR can benefit from business process outsourcing providers who are able to standardize those processes with the appropriate technology.

Special thanks goes to our Department Editor David Moore for compiling a timely and diverse set of articles including topics such as insourcing payroll to on-demand integration principles to delivering field hiring as a service.

I hope you find this issue interesting and educational. It was fulfilling to see it from concept to reality.