



Yvette Cameron,
Guest Editor

Yvette Cameron (yvette.cameron@sap.com) is senior director of HCM BPO Strategy at SAP. She has been developing and delivering HCM solutions to the largest organizations in the world for more than 20 years. Working in a variety of leadership roles for both ERP and best-of-breed providers she has been responsible for leading the strategy and development of a broad array of HCM solutions including talent management, workforce management, business intelligence and collaboration, as well as on-demand and BPO delivery strategies. In addition to her current role in the Editorial Committee of IHRIM.link magazine, she serves on the Advisory Board of the HR Outsourcing Association (HROA), and is a frequent speaker and writer on human capital management strategies, processes and technology.

Welcome to this IHRIM conference edition of *IHRIM.link*! Whether you're reading this issue at our annual conference in San Diego, in your office, or on a plane (actually, with today's financial pressures, more likely on a virtual Web meeting!) – we hope you'll enjoy this month's issue focused on Technology Trends. The pace of innovation continues to accelerate, bringing with it new options and capabilities to drive improved business performance. At the same time, organizations across the globe are grappling with economic conditions unlike anything seen in the past 25 years or more. Recognizing that emerging on the far side of today's market turmoil with any level of success will require careful and targeted investments, we have devoted this issue to discussing several of the key innovations that are driving – or are poised to drive – real business value.

Kicking off this month's issue is a great overview from Thomas Otter, a well respected industry analyst from Gartner. In his article "Broccoli and Ice Cream: Balancing Discipline and Innovation," Thomas first whets our appetite with a view on some of the hottest growth areas in HR technology. He shares his observations on growth and trends in SaaS, social networking and the ever-evolving user experience. Reminding us, however, that to earn dessert we need to eat our vegetables, Thomas tells us that disciplined focus on cost controls are also necessary if we're to be ready to capture the opportunities presented by these new innovations.

We then move into a deeper exploration of one of the areas raised by Thomas through an informative article on social networking. Proving that real business benefits are resulting from these technologies, a software industry veteran from SuccessFactors, Greg Thompson, takes a look at drivers for adoption and what's now possible with social networking and other social media technologies in his article "Social Networking in an Accelerating World." Expectations for collaboration and social networking in the workplace are growing, and this article shows that forward-thinking enterprises that leverage these capabilities are demonstrating superior business results.

Jeff Barnard, an IT architect with EMC, then invites us to enjoy "Watching IT Clouds Take Shape." Jeff provides a primer on cloud computing, discussing its evolution and acceleration, as well as a description of how, for example, document management systems can be moved to and managed in the cloud. Cloud infrastructures are becoming the new building blocks for IT, with greater numbers of technology vendors leveraging their many benefits. What this means for HRIT is the need to understand the new models and how best to leverage them. As Jeff says at the close of his article "Watch the clouds; they have a tendency to change shapes very quickly."

Next we take a look at the topic of workforce planning. In his article "Intelligent HR Software: The Power of Planning Ahead", José Luis Tamargo, a seasoned product manager at Meta4, explores the evolution of workforce planning solutions and the real challenges organizations face today in aligning decision support with organizational objectives. Intelligent, dynamic decision support is clearly a desire of many organizations, and technologies are emerging that would enable true predictive analysis. Can anyone say HAL?

With all the technologies in play today, especially in the area of managing talent, it's more important than ever to have a solid business strategy behind their deployment. In his article, "Strategy First, Technology Second," Michael Carden, founder of Sonar6, outlines a strategy for effectively leveraging data across the enterprise, starting with the concept of a common language – common hierarchies, terms and definitions around talent data, competences, and the like. Getting everybody – and your technologies – speaking the same language improves decision-making and ultimately improves business performance results.

Our department editor, Bettina Rodriguez Flick, continues the focus on technology and impacts on HR service delivery and business value through a series of complimentary articles.

- In our *Functional Focus* column, Manel Pérez Jordana tells of the journey taken by his HR organization at Gallina Blanca Star to move from a functional transaction focus to becoming a more strategic business partner for the organization.
- Jeff Higgins and William Gilmyers of Infohrm report in our *Executive Corner* column how insufficient access to comprehensive data can drive failure into traditionally successful projects such as employee referral programs.
- Check out the *Tech Notes* column, where frequent technical contributor Steve Secora provides a view to the many challenges and practical approaches to addressing single sign-on.
- In the *New in the Market* column, Eric Olden, founder and CEO of Symplified, takes the topic of Identity and Access Management into the clouds.
- Don't miss the *In My Opinion*, *Private Eye*, *In Review* and *The Back Page* columns as we round out the overall picture provided in this issue of *IHRIM.link*.

To those of you joining us at the annual IHRIM conference in beautiful San Diego, Bettina and I extend a warm welcome. In addition to all the great education and networking opportunities here at the conference, I also invite you to conduct your own survey on the hottest new technologies and trends by checking out the many solutions and services on the exhibition floor. Don't forget to look up, as many of these solutions can only be found in the clouds!