



Scott Bolman

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**A**s I write this, the editors of *IHRIM.link* and the *IHRIM Journal* are hard at work developing a new research and publication model for the IHRIM community. With the new decade, we decided to launch a new publication and complementary Web site for IHRIM, supported by an editorial committee representing both publications. As such, this becomes the last issue of the *IHRIM.link* magazine. For me, "bittersweet" is the word that comes to mind. While I'm extremely excited to be involved in the launch of the new publication and Web site, I feel a bit melancholy with the passing of such a fine publication – one in which I've found new ideas and solutions to many of the problems facing HR and HR technology leaders over the years.

Which brings me to the theme of this issue: Return on Investment (ROI) and Value Analysis; I can't think of a timelier topic! As we look forward with some optimism for the global economy, most of us are looking at the projects that were put on hold in 2008 and 2009, and wondering if it's time to go after the funding we need. Others are looking at new initiatives and projects that will position their organizations for the future and wondering if the time to make their pitch is now. Wherever you are in your thinking, a solid understanding of building business cases and measuring ROI for your initiatives is critical to secure the funding required to move to the desired future state.

In our first article "How do you know if your Talent Management Strategy is Creating Value?" by Jason Livingston, Jay Richey, and Chris Kirsanoff, the authors take on the challenge of demonstrating that your talent management (TM) strategy creates value for your organization. They describe four key elements for building a sound Talent Management strategy, including alignment with the business and IT, integration across processes/systems/data, and development of TM analytics. With that foundation, they describe how to measure value and provide examples, which demonstrate the calculations involved.

Next, in "Getting to Yes – Ensuring your Business Case has the Right Stuff," Kristie Evans gives us the building blocks of a great business case. From the inspiration for the project to the cost/benefit analysis and executive summary, Kristie shows us the questions we need to answer, the pieces we need to construct, the order in which to develop them and the order in which to present them (which are not the same!).

Third, Julie Norquist Roy gives us "The ROI of Social Networks for Talent Management." With social networks getting more press than ever before, Julie weighs in on this important topic and how this technology impacts talent management. In addition, she tackles the tough topic of senior management skepticism of deploying social networks throughout the enterprise. In the conclusion, she provides time-tested principles for getting new technology underway in your organization.

In our next article, Ed Colby provides us with "Uncovering the Business Benefits and Quantifying the Value of Workforce Management: It's not your Daddy's Time Clock anymore!" Ed discusses the potential for significant hard dollar savings, as well as an overall reduc-

tion in compliance risk through the implementation of systems that support WFM. To bring a measure of rigor to the discussion, Ed concludes with an examination of three different areas of WFM (Time & Attendance, Absence & Leave Management, and Workforce Scheduling) and cites a number of studies that have been conducted proving the measurable value of these tools to any organization.

Bob Conlin provides us with our last feature, "TRV: Maximizing your HR System Investment in a Tough Economy." Bob tells us that historically most organizations measure value by the ROI metric. Yet in today's business climate it's more than just financial returns that prove the business case, it's the actual value you are getting from your HCM solution. A proven metric for measuring your system's value is Total Realized Value (TRV). Get a handle on your system TRV and you can maximize your investment and potentially cut costs in a tough economy.

Turning to our Departments, a very big thank you to my Department Editor, Yazmin Oliveira, for lining up some special authors and topics:

- In our Executive Corner, Pradeep Upad discusses "Making your HR Data Work" and describes how HR analytics can be implemented in an organization and the value that the data can provide.
- In Functional Focus, George Brady takes on a topic near and dear to all of us; "Justifying a New HRMS/Payroll System." Through a combination of hard and soft dollars, tactical and strategic gains, risk reduction and head count avoidance, George gives us the inside track.
- Our Global Perspective article is "Growing Lean: Effectively understanding ROI and Analyzing Value with Business-Oriented Human Capital Management." Leighanne Levensaler discusses four key areas worth tackling in 2010.
- In the Industry Focus department, Michael Nelson takes things virtual. Mike shares how organizations are replacing in-person annual sales meetings with an online environment complete with a virtual ballroom, product demo rooms, a "presidents' club" for recognizing top performers, and a lounge for socializing. All from the comfort of your easy chair and (of course) your laptop.
- In Tech Notes, Alpna Gaija and Rahul Malik take us on a journey through the data substitution technique with "Data Sanitization: Implementing a Custom Solution." With the increasing risk of identity theft and data piracy, we should all be concerned with data masking.

As I mentioned at the outset of this Up.link, we are launching a new publication called... well you'll just have to wait and see. The big launch will be at the IHRIM Conference, May 2-5 in Las Vegas. Hope to see you there!