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# Informatics Research Institute (IRIS) February 2002 newsletter

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## ISRC Newsletter - Issue 3: February 2002

*Happy New Year! Welcome to the first edition of the ISI Research Newsletter for 2002.*

**T**he Information Systems Research Centres (ISRC) has been awarded a **5\*** rating in the recent Research Assessment Exercise - an increase from 4 in 1996. ***This result confirms the ISRC as one of the top three Information Systems research groups in the UK and rewards the dedication, hard work and vision of the staff over the last five years.***

The Centre, led by Trevor Wood-Harper, comprises 23 research active academic staff, 3 scientific officers, 82 research students (32 graduated since 1996) and 7 research fellows/assistants. Since the last RAE submission, the ISRC has expanded considerably, with 10 new appointments, eight promoted chairs and a new chair in the Information Society, sponsored and funded by Salford City Council. As an indication of this growth, the Centre has produced 8 conference proceedings/books, 282 refereed international conference papers and 134 refereed journal publications in leading American and European journals. The ISRC has hosted 3 conferences, 5 research workshops and undertaken 20 research projects with total funding expenditure of £2.1m in conjunction with leading organisations including ICI, Kodak, Swiss & U.K. Post Offices, Halifax, EDS, Astra Zeneca, British Petroleum, the National Traffic Control Service and the National Health Service. This highlights our major strengths: the capacity to write conceptual papers, to conduct empirical research across a variety of settings and to export technology and methods to industry.

The mission of the ISRC is to maintain and develop itself as a recognised centre of excellence for research on Information Systems, by publishing in leading international journals and conferences and by simultaneously sustaining a Doctoral School of international acclaim. Within the Centre, our approach to Information Systems (IS) is, in essence multiple perspective. We view the discipline as ranging the spectrum from the technological through to the social and organizational perspectives. Since the 1996 submission, we have consolidated our research expertise in areas such as methodologies and advanced information technologies, whilst developing new strengths that reflect the evolution and development of the IS discipline and the research expertise of new members of staff. Currently, the Centre has concentrated on four broad areas of research. These involve: firstly, an interest in the development of Methodological Intervention into complex organizations and social situations; secondly in the area of Advanced Communication and Information Technology, which is concerned with the provision of new delivery mechanisms and functionality; thirdly, Human-Computer Interaction and Intelligent Systems which deal with issues surrounding the design human interfaces for traditional and virtual technologies; and finally, Critical and Interpretive Research which addresses the social study of Information and Communication Technologies

### NEW STAFF

Jenny Lau has been appointed as an Associate on Amit Mitra's Teaching Company Scheme. Jenny is a Salford BSc Business Information Systems graduate.

Yannis Goulermas has joined the North West Research Centre for Advanced Virtual Prototyping project as a research scientist.

## PUBLICATIONS

### JOURNALS

Asensio, M., Whatley, J. & Jones, C. 2001, 'Taking Over Someone else's Design: Implications for the Tutor's Role in Networked Learning', Association for Learning Technology Journal, vol. 9, no. 3, pp. 65-74.

Young, A. J., Chadwick, D. W. & New, J. 2001, '[Providing Secure Remote Access to Legacy Applications](#)', IEE Computing and Control Engineering Journal, vol. 12, no. 4, pp. 148-156.

Basden, A., Ball, E. & Chadwick, D. W. 2001, '[Issues Raised in Modelling Trust in a Public Key Infrastructure](#)', Expert Systems, vol. 18, no. 5, pp. 233-249.

Chadwick, D. W. & Basden, A. 2001, 'Evaluating Trust in a Public Key Certification Authority', Computers and Security, vol. 20, no. 7, pp. 592-611.

Holland, C. & Light, B. 2001, 'A Stage Maturity Model for Enterprise Resource Planning Systems', Data Base for Advances in Information Systems, vol. 32, no. 2, pp. 34-45.

### BOOK CHAPTER

Chadwick, D. W. 2001, 'An X.509 Role Based Privilege Management Infrastructure', in Business Briefing - Global InfoSecurity 2002, World Markets Research Centre Ltd.

### CONFERENCES

Metcalf, M., Bennetts, P., Jayaratna, N., Jenkins, A. & Wood Harper, T. 2001, 'Development of a Multiple Perspective Framework for IS Evolution', in Australasian Conference on Information Systems (ACIS2001), Coffs Harbour, NSW, Australia.

Zarli, A., Rezgui, Y., Kazi, A. S., Hassan, T., Soubra, S., Turk, Z. & Scherer, R. 2001, 'ICT Research and Development for the Construction Industry in the European IST Programme', in e.2001 - eBusiness and eWork 2001, Venice, Italy.

Adam, A. 2001, 'Exploring the Gender Question in Critical Information Systems', in (Re-)Defining Critical Research in Information Systems International Workshop, ed. Adam, A., Howcroft, D., Richardson, H. and Robinson, B., Salford, UK, pp. 35-43. [ABSTRACT](#)

Robinson, B. & Wilson, F. 2001, 'Planning for the Market? Enterprise Resource Planning Systems and the Contradictions of Capital', in (Re-)Defining Critical Research in Information Systems International Workshop, ed. Adam, A., Howcroft, D., Richardson, H. and Robinson, B., Salford, UK, pp. 57-72. [ABSTRACT](#)

Saravanamuthu, K. & Wood-Harper, A.T. 2001, 'Developing Emancipatory Radical Structural Information Systems', in (Re-)Defining Critical Research in Information Systems International Workshop, ed. Adam, A., Howcroft, D., Richardson, H. and Robinson, B., Salford, UK, pp. 91-109. [ABSTRACT](#)

Basden, A. 2001, 'Beyond Emancipation', in (Re-)Defining Critical Research in Information Systems International Workshop, ed. Adam, A., Howcroft, D., Richardson, H. and Robinson, B., Salford, UK, pp. 111-124. [ABSTRACT](#)

Varey, R., & Wood, B. 2001, 'When Marketing Met ICT: The Mutant CRM

Allen, D. K. & Kern, T. 2002, 'ERP Strategies in Public Sector Education Institutions', in 35th Annual Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences (HICCS 2002), Hawaii, USA.

Chadwick, D. W., Carroll, C., Harvey, S., New, J. & Young, A. J. 2002, 'Experiences of Using a Public Key Infrastructure to Access Patient Confidential Data over the Internet', in 35th Annual Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences (HICCS 2002), eds. Ralph, H. & Sprague, J., Hawaii, USA.

Bourdeau, M., Giraud-Carrier, F., Rezgui, Y. & Zarli, A. 2001, 'Knowledge Management in the Construction Industry: The e-COGNOS Approach', in *e.2001 - eBusiness and eWork 2001*, Venice, Italy, 17-19 October 2001.

Rezgui, Y., Bourdeau, M., Kazi, A.S. & Zarli, A. 2001, 'An Open Specification and Framework for the Construction Dynamic Virtual Organisation: The OSMOS Project', in *e.2001 - eBusiness and eWork 2001*, Venice, Italy.

Child', in (Re-)Defining Critical Research in Information Systems International Workshop, ed. Adam, A., Howcroft, D., Richardson, H. and Robinson, B., Salford, UK, pp. 145-151. [ABSTRACT](#)

Ferneley, E. H., Hughes, J. & Berney, B. 2001, 'Effective Elicitation and Dissemination of Situated Knowledge: Exploration of an Agent Oriented Approach', in International Symposium on Technology, Economic and Social Applications of Distributed Intelligence (TESADI'01) at the 2001 IEEE International Conference on Systems, Man, and Cybernetics (SMC'01), Tuscon, Arizona, USA, pp. 1740-1747.

Bell, F., Howcroft, D. & Light, B. 2001, 'From Vendor to Portal: A Case Study of Internet-Enabled Re-configuration', in 7th Americas Conference on Information Systems, Association for Information Systems, Boston, MA, USA.

## WHO'S DOING WHAT?

Ben Light has recently accepted a position on the Editorial Review Board for the Journal of Logistics Information Management. His appointment is for the duration of two years. This journal is available at <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/lim.htm>.

**The ISI Research Forum** comprising active researchers interested in the social and organisational aspects of IS have been meeting on a regular basis. The Forum is an informal gathering that meets every couple of weeks to discuss various issues of common interest including upcoming conferences, journal papers and funding opportunities. To obtain further information on the forum, please contact [David Wastell](#).

Helen Hayes has been collaborating with Academic Enterprise investigating the opportunities available to members of the School to participate in Teaching Company Schemes. This work has resulted in the success of a number of Teaching Company Schemes being awarded to the School.

## 'An Introductory Habermas Workshop' by Heinz Klein

What relevance has such an abstract thing as philosophy got for information systems? Heinz K. Klein, of the Fox School for Business and Management, Temple University, Philadelphia, is a world-wide expert, with Lyytinen, Hirschheim and others, on how the philosophy of Jürgen Habermas applies to Critical Systems Thinking. He came to the I.S. Institute on the 15th January 2002 to present a workshop on part of Habermas' thought, his Theory of Communicative Action.

The morning was spent explaining the theory, and the afternoon was devoted to exploring how it has been applied, and could be applied, to information systems. The main elements of the theory that were covered were knowledge, types of action, and emancipation from unwarranted constraints. Though some joked that we needed emancipation from domination by Microsoft, the emancipatory effects of information systems development was discussed. The application of Habermas' thought to information systems has been in three main areas: conceptualising, methodology and case studies.

Everybody thought the workshop was excellent. One participant commented "*It was interesting the whole way through; I was engaged the whole time.*" "Overall," said another, "*it was very informative, instructive and useful. ... It helped me think more about these things.*" Yet another commented they felt they had "*moved on*" - in the morning we were exposed to the theory of communicative action and in the afternoon we were given MISQ to critique, and found that we could do so. Another participant said that being forced to get to grips with Habermas was a really good thing. Another commented:

*"It gave me, at least, exactly the kind of understanding I was looking for: an overview of the main points, and how they fit together, and which thinkers that he refers to fit where, and hooks to hang all our understanding on as we read Habermas from now on, and clear reasons for why Habermas devised the ideas he did, and how his ideas are what they are and no other (e.g. clear meanings of various concepts)."*

The workshop showed that philosophy need not be abstract. We look forward to further workshops of this kind, in which we get to grips with a number of modern thinkers so that we can apply their ideas to issues in information systems more cogently.

*Andrew Basden.*

## POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH NEWS

### [New Postgraduate Students](#)

**Mildred Brown**, PhD (Supervisor: Amit Mitra) - Mildred is working in the area of Knowledge Management in Dynamic Manufacturing Environments.

**Fotis Tyris**, PhD (Supervisor: David Allen) - Fotis completed both his first degree and MSc in Information Systems in the School. His MSc dissertation focused on IT management solution and more specifically on the models of ERP, Outsourcing and Application Service Provision (ASP). His PhD research will focus on research on the Application Service Provision in Higher Education.

**Gareth Jones**, PhD (Supervisor: Andrew Basden) - Gareth's research will focus on

multi-aspectual knowledge acquisition, for ill-structured areas of knowledge such as urban sustainability, using Herman Dooyeweerd's pluralistic philosophy as a basis. Gareth is starting from the ground-breaking research of Mike Winfield with his MAKE (Multi-Aspectual Knowledge Elicitation) method and taking it further.

**Michael Perviz**, PhD (Supervisor: Grahame Cooper) - Michael's research topic is object oriented case tool support for analysis and design.

**Eckhard Schwarzat**, PhD (Supervisor: David Wastell).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **The Northern UK Academy of Information Systems (NUKAIS) Seminar Series 2002**

The ISI is to host a half day seminar '*IS at the Crossroads*' on Wednesday, 27 February 2002, 1:00pm - 5:00pm.

Registration deadline: 15 February 2002

[Seminar Programme](#)

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### **Agents and Internet Learning**

ATL Workshop is being hosted at Salford on Wednesday 20 March 2002.

This Workshop aims to bring together researchers in software agents for learning with lecturers who intend to use online learning. Research into agents for the support of learners using the internet as a medium for learning experiences needs input from lecturers who are using online learning, who are able to provide a user perspective on the ways in which learners will interact with such systems. In demonstrating some of the current ideas in software agents for supporting learners, the Workshop will generate discussion, bringing together ideas of researchers and the needs of learners for a more complete design of software agents.

To obtain further information on the above Workshop, please contact:

Janice Whatley

Phone: (0161) 295 5175

Email: [J.E.Whatley@salford.ac.uk](mailto:J.E.Whatley@salford.ac.uk)

<http://www.ibi.salford.ac.uk/isr/index.htm>

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### **eSMART 2002 Conference: Towards a European Knowledge Economy**

19-21 November 2002, Salford University

The 2002 first European Conference on advances in innovation in the knowledge society is a European initiative led by two Project Clusters (ICCI and VOSTER) and a Thematic Network (PRODAEC\*) funded by the European Commission, involving key players in the European Construction IT research, with the aim to have a strategic concerted and co-ordinated action toward a better integration, standardisation, dissemination and exploitation of Research and Development results in the Construction and related sectors across Europe.

To obtain further information on this Conference, please contact:

Yacine Rezgui  
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Email: [Y.Rezgui@salford.ac.uk](mailto:Y.Rezgui@salford.ac.uk)

or visit the Conference website at <http://esmart.salford.ac.uk/eSMART.htm>

## RESEARCH NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

The next issue will be published in May 2002. Deadline for submissions to Donna Bailey is **30 April 2002**.

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