MISRC Researchers Win Another “Best Paper Award” at INFORMS Conference on IS and Technology for Strategic Pricing and Information Technology Research

Good news on the research front! Information and Decision Sciences doctoral student Dongwon Lee, with Marketing Professor Mark Bergen and MISRC Director Rob Kauffman, won the “Best Research Paper Award” at the INFORMS Conference on Information Systems and Technology, held in Denver, Colorado in late October 2004. Their paper, entitled “Store Quality Image and the ‘Rational Inattention Hypothesis:’ An Empirical Study of the Drivers of $9 and 9¢ Price Endings among Internet-Based Sellers,” investigates the extent to which ‘9’ price-endings occur in e-commerce. Such price endings have been recognized in Marketing as a powerful means for sellers to maximize profits, since the popular belief and evidence in traditional selling environments suggests that consumers don’t pay attention to the final digits in posted prices. Another popular belief is that the quality of a store is signaled by its posted prices. Both higher prices and prices that have “round” endings are signals of higher quality. The authors employ theories of customer perceptions of store quality image and rational inattention to price-endings. These theories enable them to study what drives the observed variations in sellers’ strategies.

http://www.misrc.umn.edu/news/


Professor Gordon Davis is one the pioneers of Information Systems as an academic discipline. His retirement in 2004, thirty-six years after the first formal MIS degree programs were established at the University of Minnesota, provides an occasion for reflection, re-examination, and re-visioning the direction and future of our field. The Gordon B. Davis Symposium provides a forum for examining, exploring, and understanding the future evolution of the information systems academic discipline. What phenomena, theories, and research methods are going to dominate the conversation and thinking of IS academics and enable its continued growth as a professional and academic discipline? What body of knowledge will the members of the IS community need to develop to strengthen the economic, societal, national, and organizational role and value of IT? The symposium will feature a combination of invited and contributed articles.

http://www.misrc.umn.edu/symposia/gds/

Working Paper Series Offers a Glimpse of Carlson School IS Faculty Research—Internet Enhances Exchange of Current Research

The MIS Research Center’s Working Paper series, over the course of the last five years, has become an important repository for the pre-publication research of Carlson School faculty in the Information and Decision Sciences Department. MIS Director, Rob Kauffman, comments: “When I first came to the Carlson School in 1994, I saw that there was an opportunity to build the MISRC’s Working Paper series into a shared resource for the academic community within the Carlson School, as well as to showcase our research for the national and international audience. Recently the MISRC Assistant Director and I ran a few numbers to gauge the growth of our working paper series, and we were pleased to see that faculty and doctoral participation and contributions have grown substantially.”

http://www.misrc.umn.edu/workingpapers/
Letter from the Director

This inaugural issue of the MIS Research Center Newsletter is intended to give our corporate members of the MISRC, our research partners and faculty colleagues, and doctoral program alumni and current participants an overview of its recent activities. During Winter and Spring 2004, MISRC Assistant Director Donna Sarppo and I, in consultation with the faculty of the Information and Decision Science Department, the MISRC 2003-2004 member firms, and other industry and university colleagues, developed a new business model for the MISRC.

We now have three components in the MISRC’s main offerings: the continuing Friday Seminar Series on “Emerging Technologies,” and two new research projects, with their associated Friday Seminar Series speakers and Research Roundtables. During the 2004-2005, we will be covering a variety of interesting topics, including: technology options in business strategy, information technology security, grid and utility computing, enterprise systems modernization, and more. We have a great line-up of speakers in store.

We kicked off our first research project—the “Outsourcing Research Project”—in early September, with a presentation on offshoring and vendor management by Praba Manivasagar of Renodis One. We followed that up with a lunch meeting, and a video-linked Research Roundtable discussion. The project’s faculty leader, Professor Mani Subramani, Donna and I recently sent out a project plan that aims to develop a “vendor management competency model” that we hope will be of use to our corporate members. We also have begun to develop a new training program in vendor management through the Carlson School’s Executive Development Center.

The second is the “RFID Research Project.” It covers radio frequency identification technologies—RFID—and the technological and managerial issues that relate to their evolution, adoption and diffusion, and their profitable exploitation in different business process settings. Mike Nichols, a senior manager at Texas-based RFID hardware/software provider Intermec, visited the MISRC in October and gave the equivalent of a one-morning college “short course” on RFID technologies and the related managerial issues and challenges. We followed this up with a discussion luncheon and a second Research Roundtable. The dialogue centered on how to create the business case for RFID when the benefits are diffused across multiple firms and the technical standards are in a state of flux. We also share views about how the technologies will evolve, and the difficulties associated with assuring performance reliability and business process value.

We rolled the MISRC’s new business model out in Fall 2004 with positive comments from participants of our member firms about the MISRC’s activities, and their recognition of the quality of our speakers and Research Roundtable discussions. Thank you for your contributions to the MISRC, and your organization’s financial support. We look forward to delivering some interesting results on the Research Projects in Spring 2005.

Robert J. Kauffman
Director, MIS Research Center
Professor and Chair, Department of Information and Decision Sciences

http://www.misrc.umn.edu/news/
Joint Corporate-MISRC Short-Term Research Projects 2004-2005

In May 2004, we began to implement a new business model for our research center that will involve a combination of a Friday Speaker Series on Emerging Technologies, Outsourcing and RFID, as well as Research Projects on topical themes that are of interest to our corporate members. In the 2004-2005 academic year, we will be undertaking two separate projects: one on global outsourcing and another on RFID in retailing and supply chain management. Related to the research projects, we expect to have four keynote speakers who will give Friday morning presentations on the topics: two on outsourcing and two on RFID. We also plan to have two Research Roundtable meetings for each research project.

- The topic of outsourcing was suggested to the MIS Research Center leadership in a Spring 2004 strategic planning meeting, and in discussions that ensued during the year. This area is currently of significant interest based on the spate of news in the popular and business press about the changing directions for IT spending, IT careers and outsourcing contracts that are being signed with service providers in Eastern Europe, India, China, Vietnam and elsewhere. The shift to outsourcing has now reached the level of more than $10 billion of IT spending per year. This makes it likely to affect and shift some of the fundamental capabilities of the American economy.

- The topic of radio frequency identification (RFID) was suggested to the MIS Research Center leadership in a Spring 2004 strategic planning meeting, and in discussions that ensued during the year. This area is currently of significant interest based on the spate of news in the popular and business press about the potential applications and business value of RFID in a variety of interesting applications. Our current assessment of RFID in 2004 is that it is roughly where XML was in 1997 and PDAs were in 2000. The upside potential for this emerging technology is very high, since there are many innovative and high payoff applications that are currently being discussed in industry and by the technological innovators of RFID tags and RFID readers. They include inventory management in the supply chain, retail inventory management on store shelves, marking airline bags to improve delivery tracking and reduce lost bags, and many other applications.

Recent News of Funded Research in the Information and Decision Sciences Department

The primary news regarding funded research at the MISRC for Fall 2004 is related to the MISRC’s corporate members’ support of our new business model. The MISRC received funding to conduct two new projects under the leadership of MISRC Director, Rob Kauffman, and Research Project Directors, Associate Professor Mani Subramani, for research on outsourcing and offshoring, and Assistant Professor Fred Riggins, for research on radio frequency identification technology (RFID) in various industry settings. The projects are intended to be “fast turnaround” projects, which will deliver results in late Spring 2005, after project initiation in Fall 2004.

- Carlson Chair, Professor Paul Johnson, during 2004 the work of his research group was supported by two 4-year grants from the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research and one 4-year grant from the National Institute of Health.
- Assistant Professor Gedas Adomavicius, Associate Professor Alok Gupta and Rob Kauffman won a $25,000 grant with joint support from the University of Minnesota’s Digital Technology Center (DTC) and the Dean’s Office of the Carlson School of Management for research on intelligent storage technologies.
- Fred Riggins and Rob Kauffman also received a DTC small grant of $5,000 to support the August 2004 MISRC Research Symposium on the Digital Divide.
- Rob Kauffman and Associate Professor Dave Naumann obtained a $15,000 grant from the Carlson School’s Dean’s Office to support a portion of the May 2005 Gordon B. Davis Research Symposium.
- IDSc Professor Carl Adams and Assistant Professor Weidong Xia received additional funding for their multi-year “CIO Project,” which has been focusing on issues of infrastructure flexibility, strategic alignment and governance of the IT organization.
MISRC Event Calendar

http://www.misrc.umn.edu/calendar/

1/28/2005  Seminar  "Grid Computing"
Ian Foster, Department of Computer Science, University of Chicago
and Math & Comp. Science Div., Argonne National Laboratory
http://www.misrc.umn.edu/seminars/2005.01.28/

2/11/2005  Seminar  "Enterprise Modernization"
Mike Oara, VP R&D, Relativity Technologies, Inc.
http://www.misrc.umn.edu/seminars/2005.02.11/

2/18/2005  Seminar  Andreas Weigend, Stanford University,
Amazon.com, Chief Scientist (2002-2004)
http://www.misrc.umn.edu/seminars/2005.02.18/

4/15/2005  Seminar  "Information Security"
Carl Herberger, CISM, CISSP, Sr. Director,
IS Professional Services, Sungard
http://www.misrc.umn.edu/seminars/2005.04.15/

5/13/2005 - 5/14/2005  Symposium  "Gordon B. Davis Research Symposium"
http://www.misrc.umn.edu/symposia/gds/