

Editorial Preview

For the fourth consecutive year, the September issue of the *MIS Quarterly* is publishing the winning paper from the Award Paper Competition sponsored by The Society for Management Information Systems. This year's winning article is by Mr. A. B. Crawford of Digital Equipment Corporation. His article describes his company's electronic mail system and provides a discussion of the lessons learned in implementing the system. Since many contemporary organizations are beginning to enter the era of electronic mail, the article is very timely.

Our second article also comes from the SMIS Awards Paper Competition and was awarded second place in the contest. This article, by R. D. Loftin and J. M. Moosbrucker of Blue Cross of Massachusetts, tells how organizational development methods were used at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts to make major changes resulting in major improvements in the organization's data processing function.

The Application Section of this issue contains two articles. The first, by J. D. Naumann of The University of Minnesota and A. M. Jenkins of Indiana University, is a tutorial on the use of prototyping in systems design. Our second Application article addresses a topic seldom seen in the literature. This is how the MIS manager can, through marketing, effectively compete with other computing alternatives, e.g., microcomputers. This article is by Raymond McLeod, Jr. and William L. Fuerst of Texas A&M University.

The Theory and Research Section contains an article describing a study of fifty-three organizations to explore the relationship between organizational context and MIS structure. The results of the study indicate that MIS structure is correlated with organizational structure. Structure, moreover, was found to be associated with organizational size. This article is by Phillip Ein-Dor and Eli Segev of Tel-Aviv University.

This issue also contains the annual update of MIS dissertation research by Scott Hamilton (ComServ Corporation), Gordon Davis (University of Minnesota), and Blake Ives (Dartmouth College).

Gary W. Dickson
Senior Editor