



Editorial from Michael L. Best

With some melancholy, I wish to inform you of my decision to step down as Editor-in-Chief of *Information Technologies & International Development*. Indeed, writing this editorial will serve as my final act; with my closing keystroke, I'll be joining *ITID* co-founder Ernest Wilson as an emeritus founding editor.

What a ride it has been.

It was a decade ago that Ernie and I felt the need for a top-notch academic journal in the ICT4D space. We wanted to start a journal that would be recognized by leading international research universities as a premier publication. While there have been a number of specialized ICT4D journals, our assessment was that none carried the rigor or cachet needed to truly establish our field within the academy.

We started *ITID* in 2003 as a publication of the MIT Press, who brought us through the first four volume years. These first four volumes were not easy. We set out to publish quarterly, but the four volumes were published over five years, and often with only two issues in a volume. These were growing pains as we worked to develop our processes and organization, and also to attract a strong stream of submission, and we are grateful for the MIT Press for standing by us.

But we evolved and developed. And I am immensely proud that, in 2007, *ITID* became the first MIT Press journal to begin publication under an open access Creative Commons license, a major step in embracing open scholarship.

2009 marked another critical milestone in the development of *ITID*, as we chose to part company with the MIT Press and, as Ernie Wilson took up the helm of the USC Annenberg School, moved to the USC Annenberg Press. Along with our publisher, there are two other organizations that make *ITID* what it is. The first is the library at Georgia Tech, whose Scholarly Communication Digital Services department produces and maintains the online presence for the journal. This is a significant effort, and the Tech library performs it superbly. And everything the journal does is made possible thanks to our corporate sponsor, Microsoft's Global Community Affairs division. The extraordinary generosity of Microsoft provides the very life-blood that allows *ITID* to exist.

All these organizations have helped to set the tone for our research quality. I have always strived with my co-editors to maintain high standards and a rigorous review process. It is not uncommon for us to send papers to more than three reviewers requesting multiple rounds of meticulous commentary. Many papers end up with pages of detailed reviews and iterate through two or three revisions.

It is this process, in particular, that ensures the high quality of our papers, evidenced in many ways. We proudly tout the recent study by Richard Heeks that rates *ITID* as the top ICT4D journal for

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research impact among 15 competing publications. Our numbers also demonstrate *ITID*'s commitment to quality—for instance, our acceptance rate for general submissions is just under 20%, making for a very competitive process. *ITID* is now indexed by ProQuest, EBSCOhost, Genamics Journal Seek, International Development Informatics Association, and more.

I share pleasure in these successes with many superb colleagues. François Bar has been a wonderful partner as co-Editor-in-Chief, stepping in when Ernie Wilson moved to an emeritus editorial position. The journal's current Managing Editor, Arlene Luck, is absolutely incredible and single-handedly keeps the journal running. Akhtar Badshah from Microsoft has been a constant supporter and benefactor to the journal. And the list goes on . . .

Ultimately, though, it is really our authors, editorial team, board members, reviewers, and readers who have made *ITID* what it is today. I would specifically like to call out the efforts of our Associate Editors and reviewers, who are willing to put in so much of themselves into assessing and guiding papers.

So, we have a solid publication, and there is a lot to be proud of. And now, I think we are positioned to take *ITID* to the next level. For instance, I believe we can improve our reach and impact in innovative ways. I think there is a lot we can do to help develop the scholarly and epistemic community even more, especially outside of the United States and Europe.

Given these opportunities for moving forward, I am enormously pleased that Kentaro Toyama has agreed to take over for me as co-Editor-in-Chief with particular emphasis on innovation and outreach. Kentaro is well known to the *ITID* community as an eminent ICT4D scholar, and he has been an energetic and critically important *ITID* Associate Editor (and, by chance, special editor for this very issue). With Messrs. Bar and Toyama at the helm, I look forward to seeing *ITID* reach even greater heights.

A lot has happened in the decade since Ernie and I conceptualized *ITID* as a way to build a scholarly community and create a viable field in the academy. Indeed, in the past decade, more of us have been tenured (thanks, Georgia Tech!), multiple universities have launched new programs, and faculty have been hired specifically for their ICT4D focus. My hope is that *ITID* will continue to serve as a singular publication venue for this community; I am confident it will.

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