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Message from SIM

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MESSAGE FROM SIM

The common thread for the articles in this issue is "Innovation enabled through IT". The three case studies (UPS, Singapore YCH, and Oman PDO) each showed us how a sustained investment in IT infrastructure lays the groundwork for breakthrough innovations when also incubated under the right circumstances.

Singapore YCH, an Asian logistics company, leveraged the strong support of senior management and a collaborative culture into competitive advantage, despite not having the scale of world-wide competitors such as UPS. Both YCH and UPS exploited IT along the value chain, but in very different ways. UPS came up with innovations that appealed to the mass-market consumer, while YCH innovated to secure the loyalty of a specialized market.

Like Singapore YCP, Oman PDO showed us how very successful IT enabled innovations don't require large scale and deep pockets. Oil is harder to get out of the ground in Oman than other Middle Eastern countries. They need cost effective and innovative solutions utilizing a network of small business suppliers that would not normally embrace IT as a way to streamline the supply chain.

Each case presented here represents very distinct cultures, and yet demonstrates how both internal and external collaboration with suppliers, customers, competitors, and functional business units within the firm, can yield remarkable results.

All four pieces in this issue, including SIM's APC column, have something else in common: the roots of these contributions began in SIM. Oman PDO and Singapore YCH were prize winners in SIM's 2007 paper awards competition. UPS has been a strong partner with SIM for many years. SIM's Advanced Practices Council (APC) contributes valuable original thought that transcends academic research to practical application.

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