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# Information Resources Management Journal

## Guidelines for Manuscript Submissions

**Mission:** Prospective authors are invited to submit manuscripts for possible publication in the Information Resources Management Journal (IRMJ). The Journal publishes original material concerned with all aspects of information resources management, managerial and organizational applications, as well as implications of information technology. The primary mission of IRMJ is to be instrumental in the improvement and development of the theory and practice of information resources management, appealing to both practicing managers and academics. It is our further aim to educate organizations on how they can benefit from their information resources and all the tools utilized to gather, process, disseminate, and manage this valuable resource.

**Coverage:** Topics should be drawn from, but not limited to, the following areas, with major emphasis on the managerial and organizational aspects of information resource and technology management: strategic use of information resources, organizational impact of information technology, strategies for information resources management, management of human elements, managerial planning for information resources, management of information technology, organizational structures of information resources management, leadership style of information resources management, information resources management education, global management of information resources, management utilization of information resources and technologies, distributed processing, expert and knowledge-based system management and applications, office automation management and applications, and other managerial issues relevant to management of information resources and technology.

In general, we seek original contributions concerning any aspect of information resources management dealing with development, usage, failure, success, policies, strategies, and applications of this valuable organization resource. The Journal invites contributions from both scholars and practitioners involved in research, management, and the utilization of information resources.

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**Example 1:** Single author periodical publication.

Smith, A.J. (2002). Information and organizations. *Management Ideology review*, 16(2), 1-15.

**Example 2:** Multiple authors periodical publication.

Smith, A.J., & Brown, C.J. (1988). Organizations and information processing. *Management Source*, 10(4), 77-88.

**Example 3:** Books.

Smith, A.J. (2002). *Information Booklet*. New York: J.J. Press.

State author's name and year of publication where you use the source in the text. See the following examples:

**Example 1:** In most organizations, information resources are considered to be a major resource (Brown, 1988; Smith, 2002).

**Example 2:** Brown (2002) states that the value of information is recognized by most organizations.

Direct quotations of another author's work should be followed by the author's name, date of publication, and the page(s) on which the quotation appears in the original text.

**Example 1:** Brown (1989) states that "the value of information is realized by most organizations" (p. 45).

**Example 2:** In most organizations, "information resources are considered to be a major organization asset" (Smith, 2002, pp. 35-36) and must be carefully monitored by the senior management.

*For more information please consult the APA manual or review previous issues of the Information Resources Management Journal.*

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Therefore, each submission is accordingly blind reviewed by at least three reviewers. Revised manuscripts will be reviewed again by the original review panel with the addition of one new reviewer. Return of a manuscript to the author(s) for revision does not guarantee acceptance of the manuscript for publication. The final decision will be based upon the comments of the reviewers, upon their second review of the revised manuscript.

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- Reviews should summarize the book and indicate the highlights, strengths, and weaknesses of the book.
- Reviews should evaluate the organizational and managerial applications of the material discussed in the book relevant to information resources and technology management.
- Reviews should critique and constructively evaluate the author's work and not merely list the chapters' contents.
- The writing style, accuracy, relevance, and the need for such a work in the discipline should be analyzed.
- The review must include the title of the book, author, publishing company, publication date, number of pages, cost (if listed), and ISBN number.
- Each submission must be accompanied by a short biography of the reviewer.

**Case Studies:** IRMJ also encourages submission of case studies based on actual cases related to different issues and aspects of information resources management. Case studies must provide adequate information regarding the organization upon which the case is based, discussion of the issues involved, coverage of any experiments or trials of techniques or managerial approaches, and finally, discussion of any lessons learned or conclusions drawn from this study.

**All submissions and questions should be forwarded to:**

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## Editorial Preface

# Fostering Citizenship via the Internet<sup>1</sup>

**Henry H. Emurian, Associate Editor**  
**University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC), USA**

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, a citizen is "...a person, native or naturalized, who has the privilege of voting for public offices, and is entitled to full protection in the exercise of private rights" (OED, p. 421). But what does it mean to be a good citizen? Often we take for granted that we live in a democracy, and we pay too little attention to exercising our responsibilities in maintaining our nation's ideals and principles of governance. Given the challenges that we obviously face now in this new millennium, a renewed sense of the importance of citizenship is urgently required by us all. This is all the more important given the trends toward political and civic disengagement and declining voter participation in national elections that have been recognized by researchers and scholars (e.g., Burden, 2000; Putnam, 2000, cited in Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, & Stephens, 2003, p. 7). Can information technology contribute to a remedy?

The enfranchisement and empowerment of citizens require identification with reference groups whose political values are consistent with freedom and democracy, and whose moral values reflect responsible personal conduct and compassion for the well being of others. Within that framework, citizenship requires being informed on issues, having a forum in which to share and advocate moral values, and having the knowledge and wherewithal to impact political decision making both inside and outside the voting booth. It means being continuously educated and willing to act for the common good of the community.

Where do moral and civic values come from? Reference groups for learning and sharing values include family, friends, neighborhoods, schools, churches, community and state organizations, national organizations, and the like. These resources are typically face-to-face interactions for receiving and presenting information relevant to members of a particular group. Although such resources may influence the practice of citizenship and the maintenance of self-governing ideals, the Internet<sup>2</sup> has created even more opportunities for existing and potential citizens to participate in similar activities when group members are disbursed throughout the country and even throughout the world.

The use of the Internet to enhance the development and practice of citizenship warrants recognition and exploration. The Internet lends itself to the following representative avenues for group identification, obtaining and disseminating information, sharing values, fostering community participation, and impacting political decision making: (1) Internet portals for communicating with local, state, and national representatives and with the media; (2) online citizenship communities, activist groups, and civic organizations; (3) information resources on moral values and civic issues; (4) discussion boards; and (5) synchronous and asynchronous interactions with political experts and exemplars of civic virtues. The intent of such an exploration is to identify and evaluate the potential benefits of providing opportunities to practice participatory governance and to model

responsible personal conduct when the reference individuals and groups are “virtual” rather than face-to-face.

Internet portals are now available for finding information about current political issues and for communicating with local, state, and national representatives. Congress.org<sup>3</sup> is a commercial portal containing limited paid advertisements, and it provides action information and access to email communications to representatives. The U.S. government provides a portal related to the House of Representatives<sup>4</sup> and the Senate.<sup>5</sup> The latter websites are free from commercial advertisements and political overtones, and both contain information on issues and a mechanism for identifying representatives and sending electronic communications to them.

The use and potential impact of these and related portals, such as Voice4Change.org<sup>6</sup> for contacting the media by email, have come under scrutiny by such research organizations as the *Pew Internet & American Life Project*, which as recently as October 2002 reported a national survey of mayors and city council members regarding their use of the Internet (Larsen & Rainie, 2002). An astonishing 79% of all municipal officials in that national survey reported receiving email communications from their constituents about civic issues. And 86% of them reported that they could handle the email volume, which helped them better understand public opinion. Although the Internet portals above may not always have been used by constituents to contact their representatives by email, those access opportunities are certainly worth considering as a starting point.

It has also been the writer’s experience that his U.S. senators, U.S. house representative, state governor, and state representatives all respond in writing or by email to communications submitted to them via email using one of the portal services above. Here is what Senator Paul S.

Sarbanes (D-MD) has to say on his website, which is accessible via the Senate portal:

I have set up an Internet webform through my website so that constituents may contact my office electronically. Please be sure to include your email address and your postal address so that I am able to provide a response.

Senator Sarbanes does respond in writing, to me at least, and thoughtfully so. So do Senator Mikulski (D-MD) and Representative Cummings (D-MD 7<sup>th</sup>). Never mind the cynical view that their responses are perfunctory. The available Internet communication resources, which are based upon information technology, clearly have potential for civic education and engagement, certainly in comparison to fatalism and complacency.

We see increasing use of the Internet for political action groups to interconnect people who are collectively identified with a common cause. For example, consider one of several brochures that the writer picked up when shopping at the local market. One flyer is boldly entitled *Together We Can STOP GLOBAL WARMING*. Inside we read that the *Chesapeake Climate Action Network* has the following objective:

Our mission is to educate and mobilize citizens of the region in a way that fosters a rapid societal switch to clean energy and energy-efficient products... History shows that most of the major political and cultural revolutions in our nation’s past—from the abolition of slavery to the struggle for women’s suffrage to the campaign to end the Vietnam War – have occurred as a result of pressure from popular, grassroots movements.

What is the mechanism for impassioned citizens to be interconnected for this advocacy? Try [chesapeakeclimate.org](http://chesapeakeclimate.org)<sup>7</sup>. Perhaps not all virtual activist groups end up dumping a ton of coal on the U.S. Capitol lawn *in vivo*, but the message is clear about

the use of the Internet to inspire citizens to identify with a common cause—and to act.

That wasn't the only brochure at the market. Try the website for the Student Environmental Action Coalition,<sup>8</sup> "...a grassroots coalition that is dedicated to building the capacity of young people to organize for environmental and social justice." There is an active discussion forum and the opportunity to join listservs. Although this organization, like the other one, also sponsors face-to-face meetings, the Internet provides a continuous identification and communication medium to keep the organization's membership connected and cohesive.

Activist websites with a more national than regional focus are represented by MoveOn.org<sup>9</sup> and Vote.com<sup>10</sup>. And one website, Meetup.com<sup>11</sup>, is focused not on the virtual interactions among participants, but rather on scheduling face-to-face meetings for local interest groups. There is no dearth of opportunities on the Internet for citizens to find a connection and community for just about any issue or political orientation, with opinions ranging from Maureen Dowd<sup>12</sup> to Bill O'Reilly<sup>13</sup>.

But it's not enough to inform citizens about communication portals, virtual advocacy groups, online communities, and the like. Citizens, and all others, need to be taught sound character and moral values and how democracy functions in relationship to them. How to do that? The website for the Association for Moral Education<sup>14</sup> is a valuable resource for learning about the former, and the website for the Center for Civic Education<sup>15</sup> is impressive for the latter. Another way is to teach the subject matter in college (Colby et al., 2003), perhaps even through distance education. Character development obviously begins long before college (Huitt, 2000), and one research group has suggested that moral dilemmas associated with using the Internet are suitable for teaching grade-school children general moral values (Burnam & Kafai,

2001). The point is that reference groups are available online for K-12 students, and all others, to identify and interact with peers and with exemplars and leaders—national heroes—who personify the orientation of action in furtherance of benevolence to community, an essential ingredient for the maintenance of democracy and private rights. Lastly, it would be well worth the effort for all Americans to reread, if not read for the very first time, the Declaration of Independence<sup>16</sup>, the U.S. Constitution<sup>17</sup>, the Bill of Rights<sup>18</sup>, and the Additional Amendments<sup>19</sup>, all of which are easily accessible on the Internet for Americans and for any other person having unrestricted access to the Internet from any location worldwide.

Even with the proliferation of websites pertaining to civic information and engagement, there is work to be done. Take a look at the interface on Congress.org. Can you figure it out? Would you take the time to explore the website? Would you use it? What about Vote.com? Could you locate the discussion boards? Would you register and participate in online discussions of editorials written in, say, *The New York Times*? Given the reported problems with the dysfunctional voting mechanism in Florida during our last national election, perhaps the points are not moot. The government sites are a bit cleaner and easier to use, but a constituent would still have to be highly motivated to communicate that way, at least initially, and comfortable and facile with the information technology interfaces.

These are problems, and so are Internet accessibility and use. In April 2003, another *Pew* report had this to say (Lenhart, 2003):

Overall, 42% of Americans do not use the Internet. And there remain clear differences along five demographic dimensions: race, income, educational attainment, community type (rural, suburban, or urban) and age.

That percentage reflects too many

disconnected Americans in this e-millennium. Although there are many reasons why people do not use the Internet, the differences evident across the several demographic dimensions are nonetheless appalling, and they must be addressed and overcome.

The Internet has great potential for educating all Americans about democracy and moral values and for fostering direct civic engagement. However, we have a long way to go to get the information technology, along with the motivation and skills to use it, into the hands of everyone. What we don't need in this new millennium is the emergence of an Internet elite that leaves everybody else uninformed about civic issues and disenfranchised from practicable participation in democratic governance. Our nation and its citizens deserve better than to allow that to happen. All citizens have the right of democratic participation and the responsibility to do it. Deployed widely and used wisely, access to the Internet can give new life to the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> The writer is indebted to John Goodall and Kathy Emurian Troyer, who gave valuable feedback that greatly improved the message and the presentation.
- <sup>2</sup> Internet is used here to include the World Wide Web because that is now a common way to refer to the medium for electronic communications and information exchanges.
- <sup>3</sup> <http://www.congress.org/>
- <sup>4</sup> <http://www.congress.com/>
- <sup>5</sup> <http://www.senate.gov/>
- <sup>6</sup> <http://www.Voice4Change.org/>
- <sup>7</sup> <http://www.chesapeakeclimate.org/>
- <sup>8</sup> <http://www.seac.org/>
- <sup>9</sup> <http://moveon.org/>
- <sup>10</sup> <http://www.vote.com/>
- <sup>11</sup> <http://www.meetup.com/>
- <sup>12</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/ref/opinion/DOWD-BIO.html/>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.billoreilly.com/index.jsp/>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.amenetwork.org/>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.civiced.org/>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.constitution.org/usdeclar.htm>

<sup>17</sup> [http://www.constitution.org/constit\\_.htm](http://www.constitution.org/constit_.htm)

<sup>18</sup> [http://www.constitution.org/billofr\\_.htm](http://www.constitution.org/billofr_.htm)

<sup>19</sup> [http://www.constitution.org/afterte\\_.htm](http://www.constitution.org/afterte_.htm)

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