

FORWARD

The main focus of this issue is the use of information technology in communications. However, as always, the IJCEM looks to provide a varied sampling of interesting work being done in the field.

We have, therefore, included Binchiang Jeng's consideration of object-oriented and function-oriented approaches to system development. Both the newer object-oriented model and the more traditional approach are found to have advantages and disadvantages and the article presents methods that will allow systems developers to have the best of both worlds.

Two of our articles on telecommunications focus on the development of modern telecommunications systems in Thailand and other South East Asian nations. Liaquat Hossain examines the history of the development of the Thai telecommunications network, its current state, and its prospects for the future. The approach is highly contextual and includes analyses of the organizational and societal backgrounds and their impact on the history.

In a second article, Robyn Lindley collaborates with Hossain in an examination of the organizational context of the development of the Thai telecommunications system and, particularly, in the evaluation of the applicability of that system to other South East Asian nations.

Finally, Schubert Foo and Siu Cheung Hui examine the prospects for improved E-mail systems that will be able to handle multimedia, in addition to traditional text-based, messages. Such systems are currently in development but there are serious issues of adaptation for users who are used to traditional messaging. The authors consider these issues and present a case study of a prototype multimedia mail system developed at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore.

In this issue we thus look back to the past somewhat, but retain our central focus on the great and rapid innovations that are so characteristic of the information technology field.



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