



Research in Information Technology

The Bi-annual Publication of the ACM Special Interest Group for Information Technology Education

Editorial Board:

Editor

Rob Friedman, New Jersey
Institute of Technology

Associate Editors

Jeff Brewer, Purdue University
Jim Leone, Rochester Institute of
Technology
Jon Preston, Clayton University
Han Reichgelt, Southern
Polytechnic State University
Mark Stockman, University of
Cincinnati

In This Issue: Notes from the Chair and Editor	1
"Learning Theory and the Re-Education of Older Software Engineers" Ken Baker, Capella University	2-10

The Chair's Foreword

One of the recurring topics of conversation at recent SIGITE conferences has been the need to establish a more recognized research agenda for IT and IT education. In reaction to this, the SIGITE leadership decided to re-brand its original bi-annual newsletter and give it a title that is a better reflection of its

nature, namely "*Research in Information Technology*."

Research in Information Technology will publish peer-reviewed articles in IT and IT Education, and you are holding its first issue. I am most grateful to Rob Friedman for making this possible.

Han Reichgelt, SIGITE past Chair.

Moving Forward: Editor's Note

First things first: credit for this new venture. Han has again demonstrated his rich combination of generosity, selflessness and vision in regard to this remarkable group of IT educators. He has championed an ethos that has its "sticky note" roots in the mountains of Provo, epitomized by the past four years of his leadership. If Eydie Lawson got SITE out of its swaddling clothes, SIGITE has Han Reichgelt to thank for leading it (and us) through our growing pains, particularly with the ACM and ABET. We could not have had a better Chair; he has our deep gratitude, as does Becky Rutherford, SIGITE's long-term Secretary/Treasurer.

The idea for *Research in Information Technology* bubbled up at one of the meetings of the Executive Committee – I believe it was in an airport hotel room near Hartsfield International. As an idea it was easily dismissible, but Han ran with it, promoted it at two annual SIGITE conferences, and has been the publication's biggest champion.

Now it's Mark Stockman, along with Jim Leone, an original "Provo" and long-time leading voice of SIGITE – joined by Theresa Steinbach as Secretary/Treasurer – who will lead us through a new phase as an organization; congratulations to each and all.

It is my hope that *Research in Information Technology* grows into a useful and respected publication, one that SIGITE members will contribute to, benefit from, and nurture. Today we plant the first seed.

As editor, I have two goals for our publication. The first is to establish a respectable impact factor, as that is a recognized measure of its importance and relevance to IT

as a research-based discipline. But I would also like to expand the definition of "impact factor" beyond a citation algorithm. *Research in Information Technology* can become the end product of IT educators, researchers, and practitioners' contributions to the expansion of knowledge in this field through standard peer-review practices, but it can do so through collective action. We can change the definition of "impact factor" if we are willing to consider the number of readers, the number of comments and questions generated by those readers, but most importantly, the number of colleagues who contribute to the development of each other's ideas before they ultimately appear in these pages. We can do this by coming together online and helping to shape, refine and challenge each other's works in progress. An open production site with the tools and functions to do so will be available soon; all you'll need to do is register and participate. Which brings me to my second goal: a new voice in each issue.

With "Learning Theory and the Re-Education of Older Software Engineers," we begin instantiating the second goal. Ken Baker (SIGITE 2009's technical paper chair) is en route to his IT doctoral defense. His research may end up having some significant ramifications for instructional design and pedagogy for a growing cohort of IT students – the nontraditional, returning adult. Until our works-in-progress site is up and running, he can be reached at the email address below.

— Rob Friedman