I was fortunate to have spent a year at Auckland University of Technology from July, 2002 until July, 2003 while on sabbatical from Kansas State University. During that time I became aware of the growing New Zealand IT research infrastructure and its education system with much to offer in a number of interesting areas.

One growing research initiative flourishing in New Zealand involves the research of Professor Don Gotterbarn and the software development impact statement (SoDIS). SoDIS is an ethics-based process that examines potential software development risk from the perspective of an extended set of stakeholders. A primary goal of this process is to reduce potential software development project failure and prevent unintended harm from occurring to stakeholders. To better explore the promise of SoDIS, an action research programme drawing from multiple constituencies, is being developed. This programme recognizes the importance of forming links between academic research, industry practice, and classroom learning.

The first section in this edition of BACIT relates to this ongoing SoDIS programme and various approaches used to build a viable community of academics and practitioners. As such, the reader will view the SoDIS community from different perspectives. The first paper in this section provides a broad view of SoDIS-related research and practice by reporting reflections on the third SoDIS SEPIA symposium. A glimpse into the growing community of SoDIS practice together with the international flavour of the effort is provided. The next paper examines a software package known as the SoDIS Project Auditor and looks at the challenges faced by organizations that must economically justify expenditures associated with conducting an analysis. In this paper, the potential pitfalls in building a traditional business case are examined and several approaches for justifying the use of SoDIS explored. The next paper continues the theme of SoDIS use and discusses the presentation of a SoDIS seminar to a group of medical researchers at the Royal Free Hospital in London. This article provides background to the presentation and a brief discussion of the event and its outcomes. The final paper in the SoDIS section moves into education and the classroom. The process of incorporating the SoDIS methodology into the Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki Information System's project management curriculum is examined and recommendations for successful use in a student project environment are outlined.

The second section of this edition of BACIT continues its investigation of Information Technology (IT) education in New Zealand but reaches beyond SoDIS-related examples. The papers in this section touch on aspects of higher learning that are of major concern to all educators. The first paper discusses the process of using degree courses to strengthen industry relations, specifically describing how Eastern Institute of Technology Hawke's Bay established a relationship with Allied Telesyn. The next paper reports the development of a new postgraduate course, the focus of which is Net-Centric computing. The final paper provides insight into the growing area of online learning with a particular emphasis on Business on-Line (BOL) at Auckland University of Technology.
In retrospect, this issue of the Bulletin truly reflects the issues faced by all institutions of higher learning regardless of their location. Developing meaningful research programmers, creating connections with industry, enhancing classroom learning, forming beneficial partnerships, and exploring online learning communities---this is the academic environment of the 2000's.

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