FROM THE EDITOR

Of Lists, Wishes, Risks, and Other Things

by Valerie J. Harvey

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As I gathered ideas and materials in planning this first 1997 issue of *M Computing*, I sent out the following invitation to the M newsgroup (comp.lang.mumps): "I am looking for quotes and brief statements, from leaders, thinkers, doers, (that's right, all levels!) in and of interest to the M community for a section on brief statements of ideas and for possible use in editorials." I am determined to see a productive symbiosis between *M Computing* and the various online resources (comp.lang.mumps, web sites, online journals). Thanks to Alan Frank, James Self, Ellis Bauman, Ben Bishop, Marc Alan Asher, Art Smith and others for their contributions.

My wishes for *M Computing* include an interchange of ideas with online resources to assure that the journal responds quickly to ideas, questions, and topics. Some of our colleagues are willing to share their remarks in the interactive forum but do not find it feasible to generate a formal article. I am exploring various ways of including the vitality of what goes on in cyberspace. One approach is to create an article for and with the newsgroup participants beginning with a collage of post excerpts on interesting, technical topics and working toward an integrated article. Proceeding this way should (1) give people with valuable ideas and insights a chance for publication and (2) give all of us the benefit of building on their initiatives as they gain wider and more formal circulation.

We should recall that our journal is itself an interface to the rest of information technology, computer science, and other fields. If we want to see the value of M Technology recognized in the mainstream, we should also realize that indexing of technical articles published in this journal is a vital route to that recognition.

During the past few months, I have sought advice on *M Computing* at the Toronto MDC meeting, from M vendors, from MTA Board members, from newsgroup subscribers, and others. The following advice will serve as a guideline:

1. Maintain the journal's role as a unique source of technical information about M Technology and for users of the technology, subject to peer review.

2. Assure that the symbiosis of M and other information technologies receives adequate attention among the mix of topics for technical articles; this can be done both by including technical articles on M and another technology being used together and by featuring articles on the "other" technologies of greatest interest to M system vendors and users.

3. Meet the needs of management in M user organizations by including articles and editorials that deal with the use of M Technology from a management standpoint; some encouraged me to imagine the kind of publication they would like to take with them to a new company or agency that was considering adopting this technology.

4. Respond to international needs; realize that many M system vendors and M user organizations operate in an international market.

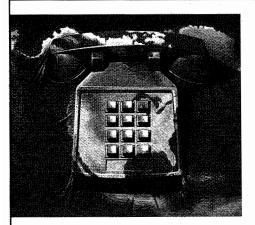5. Consider what the journal needs to present in order to be read, consulted, and subscribed to.

If we follow these guidelines carefully and make an effort to include input from all of the M community, then we should see *M Computing* become an even more useful, well-balanced technical publication that truly promotes M Technology and serves the M community worldwide. **M**

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