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Letter from the Editor

Dear Reader,

In a modern business context, one of the most distinctive features of information technology is the fact that it can add efficiency and value across an entire swathe of processes and specific operational disciplines.

Based on these trends, (E)Hospital and Healthcare IT Management have decided to resume their IT@Networking Communications supplement, which appeared for the first time in 2005. This initiative is made possible thanks by the financial support provided by Phillips (The Netherlands).

For this issue, we lined up a variety of topics, which all contribute to a better understanding of healthcare IT trends and endeavours. Our Management Section has a focus on an ever-present challenge in healthcare, namely quality. We provide an expert's overview on the meaning of Six Sigma in the context of healthcare and healthcare IT. An analysis of change management with a focus on the implementation of Six Sigma directly follows. In an effort to address the challenges posed specifically by the hospitals, where every department has specialised needs and working practices, IT@Networking Communications presents a feature on the Capability Maturity Model (CMM) and its advantages.

Trying to answer the concerns of both hospital managers and CIOs about the perceived 'investment dilemma', our next section presents several alternatives for hospitals when public funding is no longer sufficient to fund necessary investment. Making heavy financial decisions can be tough; Tom Jones advises on whether a cost-benefit (CBA) strategy, a return on investment (ROI) strategy or both should be applied.

There has always been an intuitive association between the words 'medicine' and 'emergency'. Modern technology, especially at the cutting edge of IT and communications, has brought wholly new meanings to the ability of the medical profession to manage and respond to emergencies. That is the reason why we have decided to publish an article on how Wireless technology makes ICUs more mobile and introduces new possibilities for enhanced ICU management and medical care.

Finally, in a modern hospital where errors in increasingly complex IT systems can have grave consequences, the advantage of Quality Technology is self-evident. So too is the drive to align software management activities with business goals – especially as hospitals across Europe face pressures to control costs. This issue profiles the European Software Institute, a non-profit technology foundation that not only contributes to the development of the Information Society and increases industry competitiveness but also encourage users to adopt new ICT technologies.

We hope that you will enjoy this new edition of IT@Networking Communications as much as the previous ones and we welcome suggestions and contributions to make this publication a real support to hospital managers and CIOs in their decision-making process.

Yours Faithfully,

Christian Marolt (CM)

Editor-in-Chief Healthcare IT Management

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