

Message from the Editors

First of all, let me say what a tremendous honor it is to be asked to write the editorial for this edition of the International Arab Journal of Information Technology. Let me first introduce myself and then say why I am writing this editorial.

As a professor of distributed systems at Lancaster University in UK, I have been an active researcher in distributed systems generally and middleware in particular for a period of around 26 years. During this time, I have witnessed a certain maturing of this subject area to the extent that distributed systems are now right at the heart of everything we do. That is not to say that the job of the researcher is done, far from it. We actually stand at the threshold of the most exciting times of the subject with the emergence of key new challenges most notably the increasing diversification of distributed systems to encompass mobile devices, wireless sensor networks, and indeed ubiquitous computing more generally. With this added complexity, we also seek new means of managing such systems and are turning to solutions that are self-managing or autonomic; taking inspiration, for example, from biological systems for solutions. These are important challenges and ones that can take the subject area on to a new level in terms of the sophistication of systems that we can construct. I am delighted to see that many of the papers in this edition tackle problems related to contemporary distributed systems; wireless ad-hoc networks, security and trust to name a few of the areas.

To explain my link with IAJIT, I have to turn the clock back to the very start of my research career. While studying for my PhD at Strathclyde University, I shared an office with a fellow PhD student by the name of Jubair Al-Jafer. We became firm friends during this period and Jubair introduced me to many of the wonders of Arabic culture, most notably the food! As time went on, we lost touch and with all the turmoil in his home country, Iraq, I often wondered what had become of him. By chance, I discovered earlier this year that he was working at the International Islamic University in Kuala Lumpur, and I then had an opportunity to visit KL in March and meet up with him. This was an emotional meeting after all these years and also a very sobering one especially given the actions of my own country against Iraq. As you will know, Jubair is now Associate Editor-in-Chief of IAJIT and it was during that meeting that Jubair asked me to write this editorial, an offer which I was delighted to accept.

To close this editorial, I would like to wish the editors and editorial board every success in their work with this relatively new journal. I hope to continue to see high quality papers published in this venue. As a final thought, I look forward to the next 26 years of developments in computing with relish and hope, and pray that the technologies that are developed are used for the greater good of humanity in, and between, the many and varied cultures represented in the world.

Prof. Gordon S. Blair
Editorial Board Member