

Staying the Course: The Steady Growth of the IJCIR

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It has been one year since we published the maiden issue of the *International Journal of Computing and ICT Research (IJCIR)*. What a year it has been. Journals, especially academic journals are extremely difficult to sustain once they have started. This is because academic journals are rarely best sellers. They make little money, if at all, usually from either subscription and or advertising. Both of these sources depend on the credibility of the journal and the deep pockets of the founding institution. Without both of these together, it is difficult to grow an academic journal. In our case, however, we started without both of them.

When we started, we ploughed in a scientifically barren field of Africa with limited financial resources from Makerere University in Uganda, the anchoring university. In addition, we were and still are not yet a subscription journal and we are yet to start advertising. From these humble beginnings we set out our goals and corresponding milestones to build a world class journal of information and communication technology (ICT) research. A great task you can say. So far we have done one volume with two issues which has generated a growing callous of praises coming from scholars and indeed all readers from around the world.

As our reputation has grown, our sphere of readership has also grown to cover large swats of the globe. We probably attribute the fast moving acceptance and growing readership of our journal to the very forces of ICT that the journal set out to highlight.

Right from the start, the journal got a wide electronic dissemination and advertising through several online groups. Through memberships in these groups, we started getting paper submissions. First as a trickle then into a steady flow. Because of this unexpected growth, we have been made to change our focus from a dedicated journal highlighting African research in ICT to a global focus. As our readership grew, our kraal also grew to encompass the whole world. We are grateful to all these.

As we grow, we are mindful of our original mission of serving and creating a forum for African scholars, toward this goal, we intend to publish several special issues on selected topics that advance African development issues. So in the next five years, we are planning on publishing several special issues starting with a special issue on e-government highlighting the role ICT plays in advancing good governance, particularly in Africa, creating an environment, still lacking in a number of African countries, which fosters citizen participation, transparency, accountability, responsiveness, equity, effectiveness and efficiency, and the rule of law.

We also plan to publish a special issue on e-commerce to highlight the forces of globalization on African commerce as Africa emerges from the stagnation of the last decade and century to take its place and play its rightful role in global commerce.

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African health has been and still is the most critical and most painful sector of African development emanating undesirable images of Africa around the world. We want to play our part in the development of this sector by publishing a special issue that will highlight promising roles that ICT is playing and may play in moving the sector forward.

We promise and we are committed that along the way, IJCIR will play a positive role in the development of Africa based on ICT scholarship and best practices from around the world. Africa will never again be a black hole and ICT will help remove the Conrad's image of Africa.

Your role in all this will be, and we are hoping, that you will be a reader of IJCIR and a contributor to its noble mission.

Once again let me end by calling on African researchers to consider submitting research papers with ICT application to the future issues of this journal. We are committed to bringing out the best of Africa to the global arena of researchers. The Journal, like its sister conference, The Annual International Conference on Computing and ICT Research, accept papers in computer science, computer engineering, software engineering, data communications and computer networks, information systems, information technology and ICT for sustainable development and other related areas.

In this issue, we have a collection of 7 papers covering a broad range of interests in Computing and ICT issues in Africa. These papers are coming from every corner of Africa and beyond, giving the journal an extended domain of researchers and practitioners to draw expertise from and to disseminate, grow and fertilize with new ideas and techniques.

The papers cover a wide area of computing and ICT including computer science, computer engineering, software engineering, data communications and computer networks, information systems, information technology and ICT for sustainable development. While I will not discuss each paper appearing here, I can assure you that each and every paper in this journal goes right to the core of the objectives of the journal. I call on you to relax and enjoy this and future issues of the journal.