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## Foreword: Anniversary of the journal and unusual time for electronic business

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**Biographical notes:** Dr. Eldon Y. Li is Professor and Dean at the College of Informatics, Yuan Ze University, Taiwan. He is on leave from the Orfalea College of Business, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, California, U.S.A. He holds M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from Texas Tech University. He has published over 100 papers in the areas of human factors in information technology (IT), strategic IT planning, software engineering, quality assurance, information management, and business management. His papers have appeared in *Communications of the ACM*, *Decision Support Systems*, *Information & Management*, *Information Resources Management Journal*, *Journal of Computer Information Systems*, *Journal of Management Information Systems*, *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, *Journal of Quality Assurance Institute*, *Journal of Systems Management*, among others. He is the Founding Editor for the *International Journal of Electronic Business*, the *International Journal of Internet and Enterprise Management*, and the *International Journal of Internet Marketing and Advertising*. He is currently the Founding Executive Director of the International Consortium for Electronic Business (ICEB). He was the President for the Western Decision Sciences Institute (WDSI) and the Secretary General for the Asia Pacific Decision Sciences Institute (APDSI).

Business-to-consumer (B2C) electronic business of brick-and-mortar companies has seen an unusual surge in the greater China region during the past year, not because of economic recovery from recession, but due to the epidemic of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS). After duly considering the associated risks, many consumers who were reluctant to shop online began to do so, rather than shopping at the physical stores. It is very likely that once these consumers received a positive experience from shopping online, they would stay on as members of the online shopper's community.

The issue of trust has been one of the major factors hindering online shopping in Asia. The epidemic of SARS has taught us that when there is a risk to life, the issue of trust becomes less concerning. As long as a B2C company has physical stores, consumers are willing to try out its online shopping service during an unusual time period or under harsh environmental conditions, e.g., war, epidemic, disaster, chaos, or remote

area. The incident of SARS has exemplified the potential of electronic business and the importance for a B2C company to stay agile and creative.

The *International Journal of Electronic Business* (IJEB) has been agile and creative as well. We have published special issues and articles that reflect the state of the art in e-business research. The publication of this issue marks the anniversary of the founding of IJEB. The journal has received overwhelming support from the e-business research community since its inauguration. In order to publish accepted articles in a timely manner, we have decided to publish the journal in six issues a year. Therefore, this issue also marks the transition of the journal from a quarterly publication to a bimonthly one. The journal will continue to serve as an intermediary for e-business researchers and developers, be they professionals or academicians, to share their thoughts and knowledge regarding the advances of e-business and to present the theories and practices of e-business methods. The journal will publish original and review papers, technical reports, case studies, conference reports, management reports, book reviews, and notes, commentaries and news that are related to social, political and economic issues as well as the emerging issues of interest to professionals and academicians.

In closing, we would like to express our gratitude to the authors who shared their knowledge and research outcomes with the readers of the journal during the past year, and to all the referees who reviewed and provided comments for the paper submitted to the journal. Without their effort and contributions, our journal would not have reached the quality standard set forth by our editorial team and demanded by our readers. To the staff of Inderscience, we thank you very much for your high-quality professional assistance during the publication process. Special thanks go to our editorial team and board members for their unconditional support and services to the journal. Finally, our most sincere thanks go to you, our readers around the world. Without your support, this journal would not have been sustained and continuously improved. We hope that you will continue using this journal as your source of information and wish you all the best for your research effort and achievements.