

Letter from the Editor-in-Chief

Delayed Publication

This December, 2014 issue of the Bulletin is, as some of you may notice, being published in July of 2015, after the March and June, 2015 issues have been published. Put simply, the issue is late, and the March and June issues were published in their correct time slots. The formatting of the issue, and the surrounding editorial material, e.g. the inside front cover and copyright notice, are set to the December, 2014 timeframe. Indeed, the only mention of this inverted ordering of issues is in this paragraph. Things do not always go as planned. However, I am delighted that the current issue is being published, and I have high confidence that you will enjoy reading about urban informatics, the topic of the issue.

The Current Issue

We all want our cities to be more livable and their citizens to be more informed. Importantly, we in the high tech world are in a position to help. Computers, and more precisely, information technology, can help our cities work better, whether it be in planning urban trips or urban planning, managing data and making it suitably available are key elements in these activities. And it is the handling of data related to our increasingly urban world that is the subject of the current issue.

It is tempting to believe that the technology that is used by commercial enterprises can be exploited to deal with this urban context. And, of course, there is some truth to that belief. But in a large application area such as urban informatics, important issues unique to this application arise. This may be due to legal issues, but as important, it is relevant to providing good and effective governance. And the sheer size and complexity of the urban environment poses its own unique challenge.

David Maier has worked with V. M. Megler and Kristin Tufte to assemble this current issue devoted to an exploration of urban informatics. Any such issue can only sample this very large space. Our editors have brought together papers that not only provide a sample, but also illustrate where technology might be taking us. There is a unique quality to this issue as most of us, being technology centric, are unfamiliar with the application of information technology to urban issues. Not only is this issue of interest for its ability to educate us about urban issues, but even more importantly, it may succeed in engaging us to help further the application of informatics to the problems we face every day in our own urban environments. Thanks to our three editors for bringing us this issue which is on a subject that is important and relevant to us all.

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