

# Introduction



B R E D A M C C A R T H Y \*

The theme of the 2006 Irish Academy of Management Conference was 'New Models of Management in the Knowledge-Based Economy'. We, the Conference Organising Committee, chose this theme because adapting, innovating and revitalising the organisation seemed to be a major challenge facing managers of organisations of all types and sizes.

While the knowledge-based enterprise is commonly understood as a technology-based enterprise, the speakers and presenters of papers show that it refers to organisations drawn from a broad set of sectors, such as hospitality, food and drinks, manufacturing, insurance, academia, non-profit and public sectors.

We had five eminent speakers who addressed the issue of innovation and change in very different industry sectors. We wish to express our thanks to all of them for the excellent presentations they made during the conference. The first open forum, 'Industry–Academia Collaboration: Making It Work', was led by Prof. John Bessant (Imperial College, London), Prof. Patrick Gibbons (UCD) and Dr Stephen Flinter (Science Foundation of Ireland). A second open forum, on the 'Expanding Market for Private Health Insurance', included contributions from Prof. Ray Kinsella (UCD) and Oliver Tattan (Vivas Health).

The articles in this issue were selected from the fourteen refereed paper tracks. To publish the Special Issue, we invited the organisers of each of the fourteen tracks to nominate the paper they thought

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was the best. Some good papers were not included because they were submitted to other journals. The final issue consists of *seven papers*.

The first paper, 'A Comparative Study of the Endorsement of Ethical Leadership in Ireland and the United States' (by **Mary Keating, Gillian S. Martin, Christian J. Resick and Marcus W. Dickson**), presents a comparative study of beliefs about ethical leadership in the Republic of Ireland and the United States. While the study reveals broad similarity between the two countries, the authors found that Irish middle managers differ in terms of their endorsement of the 'character/integrity' dimension of ethical leadership. The authors conclude that Irish managers possess culturally specific characteristics that have an impact on their perceptions of ethical behaviour. Given the significant social and economic costs of unethical leadership, there is a need for further cross-cultural research on beliefs about ethical leadership.

The second paper, 'Improving Merger Process Management Skills Over Time: A Comparison Between the Acquisition Processes of Jaguar and of Land Rover by Ford' (by **Emanuel Gomes, Tom Donnelly, David Morris and Clive Collis**), provides an interesting snap-shot of merger activity; the authors analyse how Ford improved, over time, their knowledge of, and skills in, merger process management.

In the theoretical paper 'Retention Strategies in France and Sweden' (by **Anders Hytter**) the focus is on the interrelatedness between retention strategies and national culture in France and Sweden. The author states that knowing how to retain employees is important, especially those who are well-educated, experienced and contribute to a company's competitive advantage. However, as an increasing number of companies operate in other countries, retention needs to be viewed from a cultural perspective.

The authors of the paper 'A Framework for a Strategic Repositioning Strategy: A Case Study of Bulmers Original Cider' (by **Paul Ryan, Mike Moroney, Will Geoghegan and James Cunningham**) put forward prescriptions for successful repositioning. This paper explores the concept and process of strategic repositioning, based on the case of Bulmers cider in Ireland.

In the paper 'The Use of Social Marketing for Science Outreach Activities in Ireland' (by **Christine Domegan**) an overview of the

principles and practices of Social Marketing is offered by the author. The author argues that Social Marketing delivers innovative insights into the social and economic exchange process that underlies Science Outreach programmes. Hence, Social Marketing deepens our understanding of networks, of relationships, and of complex economic and social exchanges.

In the paper 'An Institutional Explanation and Model of the Factors Influencing Room Rate Pricing Decisions in the Irish Hotel Industry' (by **Ruth B.T. Mattimoe**) the accounting and marketing literatures, together with case study data, were used to develop a model that reflects the reality of the room rate pricing decision.

In the last paper, 'Structural Contradiction and Sense Making in the First-Line Manager Role' (by **Colin Hales**), the author presents an analysis of two case studies of first-line managers (FLMs) in their organisational context. It traces the role of the FLM, how the role is interpreted and enacted and, in doing so, draws upon both 'critical realist' and 'sense-making' perspectives. The second aim of the paper is, from a methodological point of view, to explore the case for combining these two perspectives which have, hitherto, occupied rather different positions on the terrain of methodological paradigms.

I would like to thank all the reviewers who, with such good grace, gave up their time to make the Special Issue possible, as well as all the authors who submitted their papers to the conference; their creativity and scholarship underpins the Irish Academy of Management.

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