Welcome to IT Professional’s “Sweet 16.” Indeed, in the last 15 years, IT Pro has presented 90 issues packed with useful information on various topics of interest, tracing the evolution of IT and its effect on our work and lives. IT Pro has also addressed the challenges and risks of IT over the years, and as the new editor in chief, I’m looking forward to continuing to serve you, bringing you IT Pro content that’s informative and valuable.

I thank the many people who have contributed to IT Pro’s growth and success—the readers, authors, reviewers, past and current editorial and advisory board members, editorial staff, past EICs, advertisers, and associates. (For a list of the 2013 reviewers, please see http://doi.ieeecomputersociety.org/10.1109/MITP.2013.103.) In particular, I acknowledge the contributions, leadership, and outstanding service of our outgoing EIC, Simon Liu, along with the previous EICs—Arnold Bragg, Frank E. Ferrante; and Wushow (Bill) Chou. I also acknowledge the contributions of the editorial and advisory boards, thanking those who have concluded their tenure and welcoming the members who are taking on new roles in 2014 (see the “Editorial and Advisory Boards” sidebar). To diversify the editorial board and broaden its reach, we’ll induct new members throughout the year.

IT Pro is poised to take further leaps to better serve you, and I assume my new role as EIC with a great sense of responsibility. Leveraging your support, I’m confident we can work together to advance IT Pro and further enrich its value.

Challenges and Expectations
In many respects, everyone and everything is increasingly dependent on IT—which is now used in manufacturing, communication, banking, education and training, environmental management, governance, and personal applications. Cloud computing, affordable smartphones, mobile computers, broadband wireless networks, social media, smart software and applications, the consumerization of IT, and bring-your-own-device policies are transforming IT applications. We’re living in exciting times as we experience this paradigm change in IT. In the coming years, the dependence on IT will only intensify and become more significant.

Consequently, society is relying on the IT professionals who conceive, design, develop, deploy, and manage IT systems and applications. As IT professionals, we’re expected to satisfactorily address new and ongoing challenges facing IT systems and applications, such as cyber threats, scalability and resilience issues, privacy concerns, increased complexity, and environmental impact. We must develop creative IT-enabled solutions to real problems facing the global society. We must also uphold our professional, social, and ethical responsibilities and work collaboratively with other professionals, managers, and colleagues.

Clearly, IT professionals must be well schooled in more than the technology basics. We must stay abreast of advances in IT, emerging novel applications, new challenges and issues, and potential opportunities. The half-life of knowledge, a term coined in 1962 by the economist Fritz Machlup, describes the time it takes for half the knowledge in a particular domain to be superseded. According to a recent IEEE Spectrum article, the half-life of an IT professional’s knowledge is now approximately 10 to 12 years. Staying relevant takes dedicated, ongoing self-education—also known as “upskilling.” IT professionals must spend seven to 10 hours a week gaining new knowledge to stay current.

As IT professionals, we also must learn from our mistakes and failures and continue to improve our practice. We should develop expertise well beyond what an amateur can learn by searching the Web or via word of mouth, at least in one or more areas, and gain broader awareness of other major areas.

IT professionals will continue to face the challenge of acquiring the relevant IT knowledge in the face
We have numerous changes to report regarding our editorial and advisory boards.

Farewell

After several years of dedicated service and significant contributions to IT Pro, the following members have concluded their tenure:

- Simon Liu, US Nat’l Agricultural Library (Editor in Chief);
- Phillip A. Laplante, Penn State University (Associate Editor in Chief and Trends Department Editor);
- Jeff Voas, US Nat’l Inst. of Standards and Technology (Associate Editor in Chief and Perspectives Department Editor);
- Thomas Costello, UpStreme (CIO Corner Department Editor—the last CIO Corner appears on page 64);
- Edward J. Coyne, High Performance Technologies (Insecure IT Department Editor);
- Keith W. Miller, Univ. of Missouri-St. Louis (IT Ethics, Department Editor); and
- Wushow (Bill) Chu, North Carolina University (Chair, Advisory Board).

We thank these individuals for their hard work and contributions and wish them well in their endeavors.

Welcome

We welcome the following members who are appointed to new roles this year and wish them well in their new endeavors.

Associate Editors in Chief

Our new AEICs are

- Irena Bojanova, University of Maryland University College;
- J. Morris Chang, Iowa State University; and
- Linda Wilbanks, US Department of Education.

Department Editors

Our department editors are as follows (some will start with the March/April issue):

- Data Analytics: Seth Earley, Earley & Associates, seth@earley.com;
- IT in Emerging Markets: Gustavo Rossi, La Plata University, gustavo@ifiia.info.unlp.edu.ar;
- IT Trends: Irena Bojanova, University of Maryland University College, irena.bojanova@umuc.edu;
- Life in the C-Suite: Joseph Williams, Seattle Pacific University, josephwi@spu.edu;
- Mastermind: George Strawn, Federal Networking and Information Technology Research and Development (NITRD) National Coordination Office, gostrawn@gmail.com;
- Securing IT: Rick Kuhn, US Nat’l Inst. of Standards and Technology, kuhn@nist.gov; and
- Smart Systems: Karen Evans, Prodigy, karenevans@prodigy.net.

Advisory Board Members

The new chair of the advisory board is Sorel Reisman, California State University, Fullerton. We also welcome to the board outgoing EIC Simon Liu.

of rapid and continual advances in IT; dealing with the ramification of numerous new technologies; and applying IT knowledge and skills in a sound and professional manner to address real problems of relevance. We must identify, understand, and communicate the organizational and social impacts arising from the use of IT, and the ethical dimensions associated with IT-enabled decisions. We also must possess critical evaluation, problem-solving, project management, communication, and people skills.

We should always be looking toward the future—what will happen in the next five to 10 years, and what actions can we take now to prepare for this future? We should also look for points of potential disruption—what will change “business as usual”? Furthermore, IT professionals must deal with cultural clash—the attitudinal and philosophical differences between the older-generation IT professionals and executives and the newer generation, which is more mobile- and social-media savvy.

IT Pro can help you manage the challenges of succeeding as an IT professional. This unique publication is specifically targeted at the IT professional community—from young and inexperienced students aspiring to be IT professionals to the academics and trainers who teach and help such students, and from IT researchers and applications developers to the IT managers and executives. We supply ongoing updates and general insights, catering to the information needs of IT professionals so they can identify and address real issues and harness the power of IT for the benefit of the business, the industry and society in general.
IT Pro in 2014

In 2014, IT Professional’s six issues will focus on IT risks, NIST’s contributions to IT, mobile commerce, life science computing, the consumerization of IT, and cloud computing. In addition to peer-reviewed articles on these topics, we’ll also have feature articles and departments that address other topics of interest.

A recent readership survey reaffirmed that the departments are highly valued. So, we’ve revised our department line-up, which will now include Data Analytics, IT in Emerging Markets, IT Trends, Life in the C-Suite, Mastermind, Securing IT, and Smart Systems (see the sidebar for the department editors). In addition, IT Pro will feature From the Editors, Spotlight, and other special columns and departments.

So, you can look forward to IT Pro continuing to provide interesting and valuable information. Furthermore, IT Pro is available in a user-friendly digital (enhanced PDF) version (you can download a free sample at www.qmags.com/itp/nm11). We’re also planning to include multimedia elements (video clips, demos, and interactive images).

To engage with IT practitioners, facilitate interaction, and increase the magazine’s visibility, we plan to affiliate with international and regional conferences and symposia relevant to IT practitioners, professionals, and managers. Please let me know if a conference you’re associated with is interested in coordinating with IT Pro. The first IT Pro-organized conference, on “Information Governance Challenges,” will be held on 22 May 2014 at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), Gaithersburg (see http://tinyurl.com/itproconf).

IT professionals can make a difference, helping change the world for the better, and we strive to make IT Pro your IT magazine of choice. We welcome your contributions (see the related sidebar) and invite you to join a related discussion on our LinkedIn page (see http://tinyurl.com/itprogroup). You can also send me your thoughts, suggestions, and comments on how we’re doing at san@computer.org. I trust you’ll find the time you invest with IT Pro valuable!

Reference


San Murugesan is the director of BRITE Professional Services, Australia, and an adjunct professor at the University of Western Sydney. His areas of interest include green IT, cloud computing, IT in emerging markets, and Web 2.0 and 3.0. He’s the editor in chief of IT Professional and is a fellow of the Australian Computer Society. Contact him at san@computer.org.