The **Strategic and Competitive Information Systems** mini-track showcases promising, current work on the impact of information systems on business strategy and competitive performance. The mini-track addresses both broad societal impacts of information technology as well as firm-level competitive implications. The papers within the mini-track use a variety of research methodologies, including formal modeling, longitudinal industry studies, intensive single-site case analysis, and scenario planning.

The first session, "Information Technology and the Future of Health Care", deals with the social implications of IT in the health care industry. Dr. David Brailer will address the implications of IT for the patients, health care providers, and insurance underwriters (presentation-only). In the second presentation, "Business and Social Implications of Rapid Technology Introduction and Adoption", Eric Clemons and Lawrence Wilkinson addresses the social and societal effects of rapid technology innovation and adoption; in particular they address cases in which society’s speed of adoption may exceed individuals’ ability to adapt.

The second session deals with the ways in which technology affects competition. The first paper, "Reengineering Money: The Mondex Stored Value Card and Beyond", by Eric K. Clemons, David C. Croson, and Bruce W. Weber explores the emerging competition between electronic forms of cash and traditional money, and the ways in which electronic cash may affect competition among banking institutions. The authors offer several hypotheses concerning the roles of alternative forms of electronic money. The second paper (presentation-only) by Hugues Levecoq, "Electronic Markets and Floor Markets: Competition for Trading Volumes in Futures and Options Exchanges", studies the competition between established, floor-based futures and options markets and emerging electronic alternatives, and compares their rates of growth. The third paper, "Market Dominance as a Precursor of Market Failure: Emerging Technologies and the Advantages of New Entrants", by Eric K. Clemons, David C. Croson, and Bruce W. Weber examines the changing competitive balance between new entrants and established industry participants. It shows how information technology reduces barriers to entry and makes it easy to attack; it also shows ways that new entrants can use IT to target their entry, making it attractive to attack. The combination yields a fundamental increase in market contestability.

The third session attempts to model some of the economic impacts of enhanced technological capabilities. The first paper, "Exploring the Relationships between IT Investments and Organizational Performance: Preliminary Empirical Evidence" by Antoine Chaya and Sabyasachi Mitra, extends earlier studies of the relationship between IT investment and firm performance. The second paper, by Theodore H. Clark and William T. Schiano, "Seven Stages of Organizational Interdependence", attempts an integration of diverse theories of inter-firm coordination and cooperation, applied to the U.S. grocery industry. The final presentation, by Yannis Bakos, builds on his earlier work on the reduction in search costs evident in electronic markets. The author shows that different patterns of search costs will lead to different outcomes for buyer, sellers, and intermediaries (presentation-only).

The fourth and final session will be a panel discussion on the promising future research trends in information systems economics. Highlights of the Seventh Annual Workshop on Information Systems Economics (WISE-7, held in London, U.K. in December 1995) will be used to launch the discussion.