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# Preface

Thanks for using this book. I very much hope that you enjoy it!

I find the space where business and technology meet to be tremendously exciting, but it's been painful to see the anemic national enrollment trends in tech disciplines. The information systems (IS) course should be the most exciting class within any university. No discipline is having a greater impact on restructuring work, disrupting industries, and creating opportunity. And none more prominently features young people as leaders and visionaries. But far too often students resist rather than embrace the study of tech.

My university has had great success restructuring the way we teach our IS core courses, and much of the material used in this approach has made it into this book. The results we've seen include a fourfold increase in IS enrollments in four years, stellar student ratings for the IS core course, a jump in student placement, an increase in the number of employers recruiting on campus for tech-focused jobs, and the launch of several student-initiated start-ups.

Material in this book is used at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. I think it's a mistake to classify books as focused on just grad or undergrad students. After all, we'd expect our students at all levels to be able to leverage articles in the *Wall Street Journal* or *BusinessWeek*. Why can't our textbooks be equally useful?

You'll also find this work to be written in an unconventional style for a textbook, but hey, why be boring? Let's face it, *Fortune* and *Wired* wouldn't sell a single issue if forced to write with the dry-encyclopedic prose used by most textbooks. Many students and faculty have written with kind words for the tone and writing style used in this book, and it's been incredibly rewarding to hear from students who claim they have actually looked forward to assigned readings and have even read ahead or explored unassigned chapters. I hope you find it to be equally engaging.

The mix of chapter and cases is also meant to provide a holistic view of how technology and business interrelate. Don't look for an "international" chapter, an "ethics" chapter, a "mobile" chapter, or a "systems development and deployment" chapter. Instead, you'll see these topics woven throughout many of our cases and within chapter examples. This is how professionals encounter these topics "in the wild," so we ought to study them not in isolation but as integrated parts of real-world examples. Examples are consumer-focused and Internet-heavy for

approachability, but the topics themselves are applicable far beyond the context presented.

Also note that many chapters are meant to be covered across multiple classes. For example, the chapter about Google is in three parts, the one about Netflix is in two, and the one on strategy and technology likely covers more than one lecture as well. Faculty should feel free to pick and choose topics most relevant to their classes, but many will also benefit from the breadth of coverage provided throughout the book. I'd prefer our students to be armed with a comprehensive understanding of topics rather than merely a cursory overview of one siloed area.

There's a lot that's different about this approach, but a lot that's worked exceptionally well, too. I hope that you find the material to be as useful as we have. I also look forward to continually improving this work, and I encourage you to share your ideas with me via Twitter (@gallaughher) or the Web (<http://www.gallaughher.com>). And if you find the material useful, do let others know, as well. I remain extremely grateful for your interest and support!

Best wishes!

Professor John Gallaughher

Carroll School of Management

Boston College