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Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the newest issue of the Small Business Institute® Journal. The University of Houston Clear Lake remains excited to house the Journal and we are excited to bring you our fifth issue. This issue brings a new look to the articles we publish; while it is a subtle change, we hope you find it pleasing.

The issue explores the ways in which small business connects with its environment. Relative to large businesses, small business is frequently resource constrained and thus restricted in its ability to respond broadly. On the other hand, though, most of the businesses and jobs in a country tend to be found in smaller-sized entities.

Our first study considers the manner in which a resource constrained small business should compete. In this paper, [Williams and Aaron](#) explore the importance of specialization as a source of competitive advantage. Their manuscript discusses the relationship of Bloch and Mewes and they place this work in the broader strategy context of Michael Porter's work as well as that of Hambrick and Fredrickson.

The second paper recognizes that small business struggles have developmental outcomes for the employees of the firm. [Abdelzaher, Abdelzaher, and Harrison-Walker](#) suggest that the small and family business itself, via organizational factors, shapes the resilience of their employees. In this regard, resilience is not merely an individual response to environmental stressors, but also a socially determined resource shared with and potentially adversely affected by fellow employees.

Our third paper touches on a research theme very close to my heart; the realization that data for small business performance is hard to come by. [Cormier-MacBurnie, Mombourquette, Sneddon, and Young](#) identify Internet published customer satisfaction reviews as a source of data on the performance and responsiveness of small business. Focusing on the Bed and Breakfast sector in Nova Scotia, the manuscript documents differences in the quality and quantity of reviews given the size and quality of the B&B. Further, their exploratory study finds that the nature of the firm and the nature of the review appears to relate to the likelihood of owner response to customer reviews.

The final paper, a recent Best Pedagogical Paper award winner at the Small Business Institute annual meeting, is drawn from the pedagogical side of our focus. The Small Business Institute® cares deeply about the practice and teaching of small business and our journal is happy to publish articles which offer insight in this regard. [Hoffman and Bechtold](#) examine the field-based consulting model used in the typical Small Business Institute® classroom. In these settings, University students are given the opportunity to work on "living cases," diagnosing and offering solutions to small business owner's in their University's area. Beyond the student service learning benefits, this manuscript suggests that the field-based consulting model offers pedagogical advantages in both knowledge acquisition and knowledge retention.

All papers published in this issue, as well as those published in our first issue of 2018, are candidates for the [SBI Annual Research Award](#). This award also considers papers

published in our sister journal, the [Journal of Small Business Strategy](#). Finally, we strongly encourage all scholars interested in Small Business research to consider attending the forthcoming [Small Business Institute 2019 meeting](#) in Orlando Florida.

Publishing a journal issue is not a trivial task and it would not come together without the work of a number of caring professionals. I wish to thank the editorial staff of the journal, Cliff Mayfield, Vanessa Johnson, and Dorothy Kirkman for their contributions. We are also grateful for the contributions of our authors and we appreciate their consideration of SBIJ as their publication platform.

Finally, the process cannot complete without the effort of our peer reviewers. One of the genuinely fascinating aspects of editorial work is watching the quality of a manuscript improve as it moves through the review process; the anonymous work of our reviewers is such a critical and central task in scholarship. With my closing thoughts in this issue, I offer my humblest gratitude to the numerous individuals who continue to support SBIJ with their considerate reviews.

Kindest Regards,

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