

Published in the January 2000 issue of *DM Review* .  
 Printed from DMReview.com

## DAMA: A Message from DAMA International

By: Peter Aiken

### ERP and DAMA

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) vendors are targeting mid-sized organizations as their next growth area. This presents an opportunity for data management professionals to help organizations confront ERP properly armed with organization-specific, fact-based knowledge about ERP implementation. In particular, DAMA's strong ties to the academic community can help organizations successfully assess and guide ERP implementation, drawing on proven expertise and a synergistic opportunity with universities.

Much of the expertise in ERP has been held by relatively few organizations. There has been little accessible, research-based ERP guidance. Still, we have all heard the horror stories of an ERP gone out of control! Simultaneously, however, some organizations are reaping significant benefits from ERP by investing millions (or tens of millions) of dollars. Organizations are looking for information that will make their projects successful and help them to avoid an out-of-control (or even an overly expensive) implementation.

Public and private organizations are demanding increasing numbers of employees who understand the tenets and complexities of the ERP environment. They are relying on this internal ERP literacy to help them interact with both the consulting organizations as well as the ERP vendors. They want employees who know the business to help with the ERP evaluation/decision making, organizational readiness assessment, implementation planning, implementation and post-implementation activities

In response, universities are increasing their ERP offerings around the country. (In my home state of Virginia, three public universities, including my own, recently began offering ERP as part of the curricula.) DAMA members can play several supportive roles in this situation: be proactive in distributing accepted, scientifically gathered ERP research information; provide valuable advice and expertise to their own organizations when facing ERP issues; help facilitate the introduction of real-world experiences into high school and college classrooms as guest lecturers or adjunct faculty (most faculty love guest lecturers!); offer students the opportunity to learn more about ERP as part of classroom activities, independent studies and thesis and doctoral research.

Students are also becoming interested in ERP as a career field. I recently advised an undergraduate student signing up with an ERP services provider with a \$100,000 signing bonus!

Working together with faculty, DAMA can play a valuable role as organizations are increasingly exposed to ERP.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>DAMA Chapter and Events Calendar</b><br><a href="http://www.dama.org/">http://www.dama.org/</a> |  |
| <b>Austin/San Antonio</b>  | <b>Chapter now forming!</b> Contact Attila Finta, <a href="mailto:afinta@earthlink.net">afinta@earthlink.net</a> , for more information. |
| <b>Atlanta</b>   | Call Carol Knight, 770-392-0456, for meeting schedule.   |