

IMA: Back in the Research Business

by Kim R. Wallin, CMA, CFM, CPA

As I mentioned in a previous issue of *Strategic Finance*, one of our goals this year is to put IMA back into the research business. If we aspire to be the premier organization in accounting, then we must not only stay on the

cutting edge, we must *create* the cutting edge. Relevant, practitioner-based research will help us develop the best tools and methods for the profession and show us the future of accounting. The MAC/FAR Committee (Management Accounting Committee and Foundation for Applied Research) has the task of surveying the IMA membership to determine the areas most relevant to practicing members of our organization. The results of this survey will help determine the direction of our research. If you are contacted, please respond and give us your thoughts. You really *can* make a difference.

We have already begun research on a new marginal cost system called GPK (Grenzplankostenrechnung!), which is taking Europe by storm. More than 2,300 European companies are currently using it. Paul Sharman of the MAC/FAR Committee will report on this system with articles in the October and December issues of *Strategic Finance*. These articles will acquaint us with how GPK works, who uses it, and where it is applied. The MAC/FAR Committee will follow this up with more research from leading management accounting researchers in order to publish a comprehensive research paper on GPK in the late spring or

summer of 2004. Case studies will be developed by the fall of 2004.

The Committee will also be reviewing the Statements on Management Accounting (SMAs). Over the course of this year, each Statement will be examined and discarded, updated, or replaced as needed based on current best practices.

As you can see, your MAC/FAR Committee will be very busy this year in several areas. Their goal is to produce results relevant to working professionals at all levels. I am looking forward to next year's Annual Conference in Chicago, where the information we have obtained will be presented along with the methods to apply it in the

real world—where you really need the best practices for a competitive advantage. I hope that this will be the start of a renewed effort on IMA's part to not just use the best practices available but to be the first to espouse them.

If you have any questions or ideas for the Committee, you can contact the MAC/FAR chair, Dr. Carl Smith (csmith@imanet.org).

Remember to keep in touch. I can be contacted at kwallin@imanet.org. ■



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