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Introduction

Information services enhance the effective use and flow of computerized information. It is a new form of technology that has found extensive use in all types and sizes of business organizations. Management of information services is essential because it ensures the economical use of information systems including structural databases and information management software and hardware. The management of information services includes evaluation of service quality, management of information delivery, controlling information security and controlling information service usage. It also includes providing end-user services and resourcing information services. It ensures that business have quality and economical information systems in place.

How to ensure quality information services in a business

The most important aspect is to protect all business information that is stored in computers from destructive agents. Data disruption/destruction results from malicious deletion of information by hackers, employees, or

viruses. Natural disasters such as floods and fire can destroy computers leading to loss of information.

Information can also be lost through acts of terrorism. It is important therefore, for all organizations to take precautions against natural disasters and malicious deletion of information from computers. Installation of data back-up software and insuring its full use also helps in data protection. Installation of anti-virus software in computers also helps to prevent data loss.

There are approximately 60, 000 known computer viruses, which are a threat to data stored in computers. The six types of computer viruses are boot-sector virus, worms, macro-viruses, e-mail attachment viruses, Trojan viruses, and hoax e-mail viruses. Another important aspect is protection of the computer itself. One should not switch off the computer when an external storage device is still connected. Opening of e-mails from strangers and downloading of software from unknown sources are practices that pose danger to a computer. Therefore, computer users should avoid these practices. Users should also turn off macros in Word and Excel unless they use them regularly.

They should not reply to spam and should ensure that antivirus and blocking software are effective and up to date. Information systems support end-user support; end-user computing involves resourcing and delivery of information services to end users. End-user development techniques include training, suitability reviews, improvising standards for development as well as software and data audits. These systems also ensure corporate data

security. Two frameworks are important in ensuring online services quality: WEBQUAL and E_SERVQUAL.

WEBQUAL deals with functional design issues utilizing information dimensions. These dimensions are information quality, tailored communication, ease of understanding, innovativeness, and emotional appeal. On the other hand, E_SERVQUAL deals with service provision and uses seven dimensions viz. efficiency, fulfillment, reliability, privacy, responsiveness, compensation and contact. Ensuring the quality of information services requires the use of both software and hardware facilities, which bring in the concept of the economic value of the investment.

The concept of total cost of ownership

This concept measures the economical aspect of any business venture. In information services, this refers to the lifetime cost of purchasing, maintaining, and supporting any technology component. This includes the cost of hardware and software components. The cost of preparation and distribution of information is also part of this. Some organizations opt to outsource some of the technological requirements to increase their profitability.

Conclusion

Proper management of information services is essential to ensure the safety of information as well as its availability.

This ensures the smooth running of the different departments in all organizations. It calls for the use of certain technological hardware and software as well as qualified personnel that brings in the concept of cost ownership. Organizations cannot avoid wise and proper management of information services in this service-centered society.