

# Computer information



There are many types of group collaboration software. For team dynamics, there is group scheduling software to schedule meeting. To support the execution of meetings, there are electronic meeting software, videoconferencing software, and the whiteboard software. For document management, a group document database may be used to store documents. For application development, there is the workflow automation software that can automate the flow of business documents (Williams, Sawyer, & Hutchinson, 1997).

Since I am a teacher teaching mathematics in a school, the group collaboration software used is limited to team dynamics software including outlook express and MSN messenger. Both outlook express and MSN messenger support electronic messaging and the sending of electronic documents. The advantage of MSN messenger is that communication is faster rather than having to walk across the staff room to the person whom you wish to talk to. Documents can be sent via MSN messenger too. The disadvantage is that communication has to be real-time. If the person to whom you wish to communicate to is teaching classes, communication is impossible. Fortunately, there's always outlook express. The advantage of outlook express makes up for the disadvantage of MSN messenger. Communication is possible at different times from different places, in addition to the capability of sending documents. The disadvantage of outlook express is that verbal and non-verbal cues such as tone, inflection, and facial expression are missing (Montoya, 2003).

Office automation systems include the electronic office such as computers, fax, and computerized telephone systems, as well as office automation applications such as word processing, electronic mails, desktop publishing,

fax, image processing, and teleconferencing. The trend is to integrate these applications (Williams, Sawyer, & Hutchinson, 1997).

In the school where I am teaching, we use computers, Microsoft office applications such as word processing, Microsoft PowerPoint, and outlook express, as well as a 4 in 1 fax, scanning, scanning to e-mails, printing, and photocopying Xerox machine. The advantages are increase in productivity and cost savings as information is quickly routed for maximal office performance. Also, as microcomputers become increasingly more powerful and at the same time cheaper and technology makes it possible to integrate these applications, the use of office automation system becomes more cost effective. Moreover, the 4 in 1 fax, scanning, printing, and photocopying Xerox machine saves space. Lastly, through digital output, office automation systems remove time and geographical limits. The disadvantage of office automation systems is that training has to be conducted to overcome employee resistance. For example, a training session was conducted when the 4 in 1 Xerox machine was acquired last year to teach employees how to scan images to their own e-mails and to colleagues' e-mails. Second, occupational hazards such as repetitive motion syndrome may result from using office automation systems. Repetitive motion syndrome is a medical disorder associated with lengthy keyboard inputting and poor ergonomics arrangement. Similarly, vision and overall health considerations associated with electromagnetic computer emissions are also an issue. Lastly, unlike hard copy, digital information is more easily available and distributed. Hence, data security is a concern. Therefore, our school has established policies regarding e-mail usage (Thomson Gale, 2006).

## REFERENCES

Montoya, A. (2003). Group Collaboration. Retrieved July 22, 2006, from <http://dis.eafit.edu.co/cursos/st717/2003/2/material/mensajeria-electronica/group-colaboration.pdf>

Thomson Gale (2006). Office Automation. Retrieved July 22, 2006, from <http://66.102.7.104/searchq=cache:gaFHTfK3vI0J:www.referenceforbusiness.com/encyclopedia/Mor-Off/Office-Automation.html+office+automation+system+advantages+disadvantages&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=10>

referenceforbusiness.com/encyclopedia/Mor-Off/Office-Automation.html+office+automation+system+advantages+disadvantages&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=10

Williams, B. K., Sawyer, S. C., Hutchinson, S. E. (1997). A Practical Introduction to Computers & Communications. Irwin: McGraw-Hill.

Williams, B. K., Sawyer, S. C., Hutchinson, S. E. (1997). A Practical Introduction to Computers & Communications. Irwin: McGraw-Hill.