

Social impacts and threats of it



Over the last 40-50 years the impact IT has had on our lives and our society is astonishing! There are many different impacts associated with this topic, a few of which are Social, Economical, Legal and Ethical. We rely on IT systems to do the simple things we take for granted in our day-to-day lives such as: media, entertainment (gaming and television), advertising (products and services) etc.

IT has developed more than ever over the past decade and although we may not notice how IT has changed, it is constantly altering everything we do in our everyday lives. Many people nowadays take the use of IT for granted.

Social Impacts

How we spend our extra time

Currently in the U. K a staggering 97% of people in the U. K have a PC or a computer of some sort in their homes. However, in this day and age most people use a computer as part of everyday life, whether it is for work or socialising.

Nowadays most young people in the U. K spend a large quantity of their time on the computer. It is thought that on average a normal teenager spends around 31 hours a week on the computer alone and a mind-blowing nine of these hours are on social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace etc.

Although for many of our Grandparents and even our Parents this was very different!

Nowadays young people are constantly being nagged by Grandparents and Parents about spending too much time indoors and not enough outdoors.

We are told that we spend far too much of our time inside (playing computer games or watching television) and that we do not spend nearly enough time outside getting the fresh air that our body needs.

It is thought that this younger generation seems to have a lot more recreational time than the older, previous generations. It is obvious that people of the older generations did not have nearly as much free time on their hands as we do today. As nearly all of their time was taken up by working, chores and other tasks and duties. However, for us many of these chores have been made easier by various IT solutions throughout the years. Saving time and effort for us today and as a result leaving us much more free time.

Effects on local communities

Now as a result of internet development, there are 1000's of new and diversified websites that are available to consumers, offering them a wider and larger selection of goods and services online. Consequently some traditional facilities, such as local clothing shops, continue to lose customers and are subsequently forced to close down as they are no longer needed within the society.

Another prime reason for this reoccurring problem is that people are becoming increasingly laid-back and don't want to have to take a trip into the shops when they can just order everything they need to their doorstep

from the comfort of their own homes. As more local shops close down there is less work within this industry and the immediate area. This can have a very negative effect on the local community.

Economic Impacts

Employment structure and working practices

IT has changed the foundation of how people work in many different occupations. Good examples of occupations that have been transformed by the Impact of IT include typists who typed letters on a typewriter and administrators who used to keep paper based records.

Now as well as IT transforming the methods of work in many other occupations, new jobs have been created, giving people the chance to develop new skills within the InformationTechnologyindustry. In addition to this IT is now an essential part and key skill to many jobs today and is further required 90% of all employers! With Internet access extensively available throughout the world, many people can communicate and work away from their office and in the comfort of their own home as it may suit their lifestyle better.

This is now a very popular option for several employees.

Sustainability

Computers are not all good. There are negative points and various problems related to the invention of the computer. Computers use a high amount of power and electricity and with so many in homes, businesses and even

schools; this is becoming a foremost problem and a colossal contribution to energy consumption and other issues relating to this such as climate change!

Additionally, people are overjoyed and excited when new and more modern versions of the computer are developed because it means there is a new and better way of doing things that make life that extra bit easier. However, behind the scenes this is not good, it is a huge problem. The question many people in our society today forget to ask ourselves is where does the old computer equipment that we no longer need or use go?

As a result of not enough people caring where the disposal of unwanted electrical equipment (not only computers) goes this problem is handed over to the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive (WEEE Directive 2007). Under the rules and regulations of this organisation, the manufactures of electrical equipment are obligated to provide consumers that purchase a new piece of electrical equipment a method of disposing of the apparatus that their purchase is replacing.

Legal Impacts

Ownership, copyright and plagiarism

When using information or data that is not your own work it is important that you recognize that copyright of the creator. In the United Kingdom the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 gives the authors of written work, music and films rights to control the ways that their material may be used. However because music and films are so easy to download over the internet, many people break this law and use the internet to steal material in

copyright. Some people even set up file sharing web services that allow users to share and view copyrighted material, mainly films and music.

As well as copyright, plagiarism is an increasing problem and is commonly found within schools.

Most school children today view plagiarism as “changing it into their own words” and don’t really recognise or grasp the concept that it is illegal! Plagiarism is commonly carried out in assignment work submitted by learners in schools, colleges, and even universities. You are allowed to quote other peoples work as long as you recognise the source of information, however you are not allowed (and it is illegal) to pass other peoples work off as your own.

Ethical Impacts

Privacy of information

Currently with so much personal and private information stored on computers, personal privacy has become a problem. Nowadays almost every small characteristic and proportion of your life is recorded on a computer, including who you call on your mobile phone, what you search for on search engines such as Google, your medical records and even you relatives.

Social Networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter etc are becoming a major problem when relating to privacy. Millions and millions of people all over the world have an account of some sort on a social networking site, many people put up pictures of themselves and post blogs and wall posts of exactly where they will be and exactly what time they will

be there. As a result of this, it could be dangerous as many of these sites are not secured properly.

However personal information about living individuals is protected by the Data Protection Act (1998). The Data Protection Act is a law passed in 1998 that requires companies that store personal information about people on their computers, to register with the Data Protection Registrar which obligates them to keep to the eight Data Protection Principles.

Unequal Access

Although there are numerous different benefits of Internet access, what happens to the people who can't get high speed access to the internet?

Local and national implications

In the United Kingdom many people who live in rural or countryside areas are not able to get broadband internet access because of the location in which they live in. Many telephone and cable companies refuse to lay down cables which allow people in the countryside to receive internet access because they believe that the cost of laying down the cables would be a lot higher than that of what the customer have to pay to receive the broadband connection.

Another prime contribution to this problem is age, some elderly people may find it difficult to understand and interpret new technology. As many services such as banking and utilities (for example electricity and oil) become progressively more internet-based, many older people might find it hard to access these facilities. They could also be placed at an economic

disadvantage as many goods and services are mostly cheaper online than that of their usual ways. For example many oil suppliers offer a discounted rate if people manage their accounts online.

It is also good to remember that Internet access is not free and not everyone can afford to pay Internet charges therefore it is putting less economically stable families at a disadvantage compared to more economically stable families.

Global implications

Many people in today's society that live in Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDC'S) may too find it difficult to receive internet access. Today many aspects of development such as economic and educational rely on the internet and computer skills. For some people who do not have access to this they are in danger of being left further behind. Sometimes people call the divide between the people who don't have easy access to computer technologies and those who do the digital divide. Now as a result of unequal access a number of projects have been set up, such as One Laptop per Child to help develop low-cost computing solutions.

Abuse of IT

The same as many other great things in life, all great things have a drawback and in IT this is no different especially with the internet. There are many different threats and exasperations that all IT users need to be conscious and aware of.

Threats

<https://assignbuster.com/social-impacts-and-threats-of-it/>

Cyber Bullying

Around 10 percent of all adolescents' are victims of internetbullying. This type of bullying can be a scary and worrying problem and in turn can be more serious than conventional bullying. There are many different ways that and methods that can be used, including social networking sites, SMS, e-mails and chatrooms. Many Cyber bullies encourage their friends to join in the bullying and therefore are all bullying the one person collectively as a group.

Spam

Spam is unwanted e-mail advertising. If you have an e-mail account you will generally receive e-mails that are advertisements most of which are annoying and have the potential to be dangers and harmful to your computer or PC. However e-mail users need to be cautious and aware when opening attachments in e-mails as they could contain viruses.

Phishing

Phishing is a method, used by criminals, to try and acquire information such as usernames, passwords and credit card details by masquerading as a trustworthy individual in an electroniccommunicationservice. A widely used method that almost all phishing criminals use is they send people an e-mail disguised as if it is coming from their bank. The e-mail usually tells them to then click a link within the e-mail which then directs them to a page that looks like the log-on screen to their online bank account. However, the web page is under complete control of the criminals' and therefore allows them to

determine the victim's username, password and various other security details. After this the criminals then use this information to gain access to the victim's bank account and go on to steal money out of it.

Denial of service attacks

A denial of service attack (DOS attack) or distributed denial of service attack (DDoS attack) is an attempt to make a computer resource unavailable to its intended users. Although the means to carry out, motives for, and targets of a DoS attack may vary, it generally consists of the determined efforts of a person, or multiple people to prevent an Internet site or service from working efficiently or at all, temporarily or indefinitely. Perpetrators of DoS attacks typically targets sites or services hosted on high-profile web servers such as banks and credit card payment gateways.