Advantages and disadvantages of office automation and groupwares

Advantages and Disadvantages of Office Automation and Groupwares It can never be denied how technology makes life a lot better for the people. No wonder that works in all aspect of life gets to be done easier and faster. In terms of business and commerce, Office Automation and Group Collaboration are pioneers in making companies more competitive.

Office Automation is the integration of office information functions, including word processing, data processing, graphics, desktop publishing and e-mail. Using a Local Area Network (LAN), it allows users to do multi-office functions like dictation, typing, filing, copying, fax, Telex, microfilm and records management, telephone and telephone switchboard operations. With this type of technology, the different users within the local network can simultaneously do the above functions. The greatest contribution of this technology is that it eliminates repetitive task and makes longhand jobs a push-button one. For example, when selling a product, the user needs not to type both the product's name and the price every time there are transactions. What the user only got to do is to press the code and everything pops in. One most commonly used application is Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Access.

The Group Collaboration Software (Groupware), however, are single piece of software acting as a facilitator for several users who inputs information in it. This serves as a common storage for different files coming from different users. With this software, one can easily access to different information sent by different users within the local network. He can then check if he's still on the right track finding related information to others making them a collaborative team. As a simple illustration of how this works, let's just say we are five in a team. Our boss would like us to research on a certain topic

and come up with a conclusion. All of us would try to divide the topic into subtopics then do individual research. We are going to input our researches on a logbook to file it up. This then would be the function of the groupware. One most popularly known groupware is the Microsoft Outlook. Video conferencing is also allowed in this kind of software.

But as wise-thinkers, we must always see the pros and cons of every technological products coming out. Nothing will always be perfect. Everything has its disadvantages. The Office Automation software cannot be used without the main server. If the main server is closed, then nobody can access the program. Also, if there will have a problem with one of the system, the functions of all other systems will get affected. Other's functioning units might have problem running the program. Another is that with the use of Office 2000, Windows XP, and Office 2003 will make the application run slow because of the Microsoft Windows Installer (MSI) they use. The MSI would require the users to approve the installation of the software and of course, this needs an installation disk. Considerations with regards to licensing will also be considered. Lastly, like any other programs, the Office Automation is susceptible to viruses. Careful downloads of anonymous file from the net must always be guarded.

There are also some considerations for the Groupware. Because it allows people to interact using the computers, it then follows that people lose their face-to-face interactions. They are not able to witness facial expressions and body languages. They cannot hear the tone of how the words are said. Therefore, truth value are also lessened. And because it keeps tracks to teams' collaboration, it limits individual ideas. In terms of features, it can have very narrow range of capabilities or too complex capabilities that are

too cumbersome to understand. There can be mistakes in usage by inexperienced users. Lack of privacy is also a concern. Same with Office Automation, its implementation might cost a lot of money and can only be used by computer literates.

Corporations to be better competitors must always have improvements within the organization. The help of these modern technologies, there's no way for us not to be more competitive, progressive and reach the pedestal. It just a matter of how we're going to use them properly because like any other asset, it can either make us, or the other way around, break us.

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