

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
FACULTY OF COMMERCE
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
MAIN EXAMINATION PAPER, MAY 2009

- TITLE OF PAPER** : **MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS**
- DEGREE AND YEAR** : **IDE LEVEL 4**
- COURSE CODE** : **BA 311 - 2**
- TIME ALLOWED** : **THREE (3) HOURS**
- INSTRUCTIONS** :
- 1. THIS PAPER CONSISTS OF SECTIONS (A) AND (B).**
 - 2. THE CASE STUDY SECTION (A) IS COMPULSORY. TOTAL MARKS FOR THIS SECTION IS 40.**
 - 3. ANSWER ANY THREE QUESTIONS FROM SECTION (B). TOTAL MARKS FOR THIS SECTION IS 60.**

NOTE: MARKS WILL BE AWARDED FOR GOOD COMMUNICATION IN ENGLISH AND FOR ORDERLY PRESENTATION OF WORK.

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SECTION A. - COMPULSORY

WEB 2.0 TOOLS

Who's blogging? Its not just twenty-somethings who want to chronicle their experiences, vent about consumer products, or put out a political message. Today's blogger might very well be an employee at Intel, IBM, or any number of companies that have embraced Web 2.0 tools. Blogs, wikis, and social networking are emerging as powerful tools to boost communication and productivity in the corporate workforce. McKinsey & Co. reported that approximately one-third of the top executives it polled have Web 2.0 tools in use or plan to deploy them.

Web 2.0 tools have made inroads into the business world because the software that supports them is generally inexpensive and user friendly. A manager who wants to communicate with his or her team via a blog or have the progress documented on a wiki can institute the technology without help from the I.T department and without superiors worrying about high costs.

At Sun Microsystems, management compelled its engineers to create wiki pages that described their projects. Once the engineers were comfortable with the technology, it was easier for them to transition to using wikis for the company's formal software documentation. The use of wikis also spread to meeting notes, project plans, and software reports, resulting in a total four-fold increase in the amount of documented information at Sun.

Web 2.0 tools are particularly valuable at IBM, where 42 percent of the workforce operates remotely, either from home or client offices. Brian Goodman, who is the Connecticut-based manager of a software development team with members in New York and Massachusetts,

says that the wikis give him “a single view of projects and their status without pinging each” worker every day with an instant message.

The use of social networking in business is so far limited mostly to recruiting and making sales contacts. Recruiters at Microsoft and Starbucks have used Linkedia® to search for potential job candidates. At IBM however, employees engage in social internetworking internally through its corporate directory. BluePages®, which is edited by employees and serves as a sort of internal corporate MySpace®. The directory contains basic information on 400,000 employees and is accessed, on average, six million times daily. Employees have control of most of the content on their individual entries, and can post their own photos and resumes (curriculum vitae) to their corporate “profiles”.

Two of the biggest challenges for companies using Web 2.0 technologies are convincing workers to embrace these tools, and regulating their use. IBM reminds employees to remember the rules of privacy, respect, and confidentiality in its corporate code of conduct and does not allow any anonymous online communication.

Case adapted from Laudon and Laudon, Management Information Systems, 8th Edition.

1. Based on your overall understanding of information systems, what key benefits to the organization do Web 2.0 tools provide. Explain, *under headings*, only 3. (15 marks)
2. How can management of companies using Web 2.0 tools ensure security of information on networks? Explain, *under headings*, 5 strategies. (25 marks)

SECTION B – ANSWER ANY 3 QUESTIONS

Question 2

Warren McFarlan suggests 4 intervention strategies that can help to minimize project risks. Explain these four strategies, giving a situation as an example for each strategy (20 marks)

Question 3

Suppose you were a new company established to sell cars and property over the internet. Your target market would be Swazi customers because it would be easier for you to deliver your “products”. *Use Schein’s Theory of Technology Assimilation to explain the introduction and acceptance of this type of service provision*, providing appropriate illustrations/examples. When using the term “users”, you must clearly explain the type of users you are referring to i.e. company employees or customers. (20 marks)

Question 4

An organization is contemplating introducing a new system. One of the issues they must consider is that of how the software will be made available. Given what you know about implementing a new system, *explain 4 key points (under headings)* the organization must consider. For each point help the organization by suggesting the better option of providing the software necessary. (20 marks)

Question 5

- a. Explain 4 symbols used when drawing data flow diagrams. (8 marks)
- b. Given *your* understanding of McFarlan’s Portfolio model, provide and briefly explain 3 criticisms (*under headings*) of the model. (12 marks)