

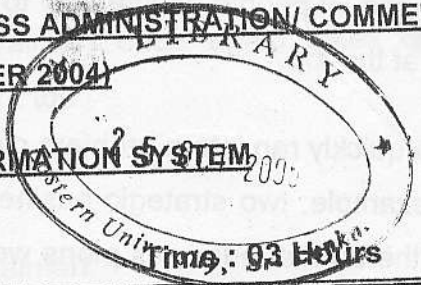
EASTERN UNIVERSITY, SRI LANKA

FACULTY OF COMMERCE AND MANAGEMENT

3rd YEAR / 1st SEMESTER EXAMINATION IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION/ COMMERCE -

2003 / 2004 (NOVEMBER 2004)

MGT 3084 MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM



Answer all questions

Q1. The Executive Support System at Walmart

"I am not sure whether we have fewer meetings, but they are more productive," said Walmart executive Smith. "We very rarely have a meeting at which we don't have enough information and data to make a decision". In 2001, Rana Walmart information systems manager, began converting the company's Top level executives to computerized information management. The arrangement of work stations, PC, networks, and software Rana designed was soon called the Executive Support System (ESS). Currently, the top level 150 managers and 500 other users at Walmart are tied into ESS. Fortune called the Walmart System "probably the most far - reaching in any company".

Smith explained how ESS has improved meetings: "We had what is called the extended management committee meeting. When I was in Britain, I had to come to the United States for these meetings once a month. The reading material I had for the meeting was supposed to come a week in advance, but sometimes it was only three days. I still needed time to analyse it and comment on it, have my staff go over it. So I sometimes faced the prospect of reading it in a hotel room the night before the meeting, which was clearly ridiculous. Now, it's all on the ESS.

Smith commissioned Rana to improve the effectiveness of the headquarters' staff and cut costs. Rana hired Thana, managing director of office Future Inc., to help "Compared to people, technology is cheap," said Smith."

I felt sure that technology could help reduce staff, the major expense item. But we realized we could not just present the system and say, 'Here is the answer to your

prayers, and by the way take a ten percent cut in your people.' You have to provide tools and let people decide how to use them most efficiently.' He added, "But we had to start at the top."

Rana quickly ran into a problem created by non – standardized reports and terminology. For example, two strategic business units might have different definitions for revenue. And the annual business plans were in varying formats, often depending on where the preparer previously worked or attended business school. Working with Smith and other executives, Rana, designed five – page business plan. Each business unit put its plan on ESS five days before the annual planning meeting.

Security safeguards in the system limited access to executives with a "need to know". But Walmart managers all over the world could see the proposed plans immediately. Such information could be downloaded from ESS and called up on laptop computers even during airline flights.

ESS is central to execution of Walmart's overall strategic plan for the 2003s, and in serving customers. Former chief executive David was instrumental in turning the big marketer of document processing equipment into a customer – focused organization with "high expectations" of itself and "total quality control (TQC)". David focused on reducing manufacturing costs and overhead and making the company less complicated. David also keyed in on understanding what customers really needed not just wanted – from Walmart. Among the elements of David's plan were a "quality vice president" to act as change agent, "standards and measurements", training that would "cascade" down from senior managers, "recognition and rewards," and pervasive communication.

After putting the plan into effect, Walmart nearly doubled its return on assets and generated 1 billion rupees in surplus cash. Effective communication and an emphasis on quality have become integral parts of the Walmart way of doing things, which may account for what appears to be very bright future for the company, in fact, a main part of the executive support system is information concerning each of Walmart's customers. Walmart's policy of focusing on the total process and providing tools and letting people decide how to use them most efficiently has spread beyond the company to customer's companies. Walmart places great value on effective communication with customers and

helping them enhance quality. Walmart employees actually listen to customers and help them rethink the way they work, so Walmart can better help customers be more productive. The executive support system at Walmart once again takes on new importance, as a customer satisfaction enhancement tool

Questions

Q1. (a) Discuss the nature of ESS available at Walmart. (05 Marks)

(b) The executive at Walmart stressed the importance of training the staff in the new computer system and starting it with the top level management. Agree or Disagree. Explain. (09 Marks)

(c) How ESS is used for strategic planning at Walmart. Explain. (07 Marks)

(d) How ESS can be used as a "customer satisfaction enhancement tool" at Walmart. Explain. (07 Marks)

(Total 28 Marks)

Q2. (a) "Information Communication Technology plays a pivotal role in the success of the modern business organization". Discuss. (06 Marks)

(b) Explain about a typical Accounting Information System, how its components are related to each other in terms of input and output flows. (06 Marks)

© How can Internet technologies improve customer relationships and service for a business? (06 Marks)

(Total 18 Marks)

Q3. (a) To access the impact of Information Technology (IT) for the competitiveness, in what ways companies should think and plan?

(06 Marks)

(b) List the Role of a database administrator?

(03 Marks)

(c) Compare the Neural Networks and Expert systems based on the following Parameters?

- (1) Process
- (2) Input data
- (3) Algorithm
- (4) Computation
- (5) Data processing
- (6) Output Results

(06 Marks)

(d) Identify three main types of system development methods or Approaches.

(03 Marks)

(Total 18 Marks)

Q4. (a) Explain the overall processing of a Data Warehouse?

(06 Marks)

(b) In implementing enterprise networking in an organization, how client – server model of computing will support it? Explain?

(06 Marks)

(c) Telecommunications can be beneficial to a business organization in the following ways.

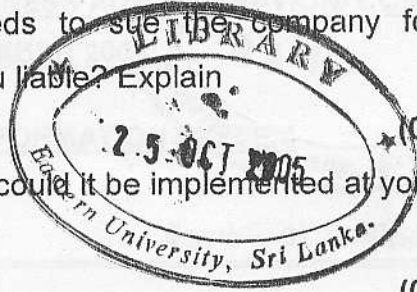
- (1) Overcome geographic barriers
- (2) Overcome time barriers
- (3) Overcome cost barriers
- (4) Overcome structural barriers

Explain the above 4 ways with suitable examples.

(06 Marks)

(Total 18 Marks)

Q₅. (a) Employee John downloads adult material to his PC at work, and employee Rohan see it. Rohan then proceeds to sue the company for sexual harassment. As the employer, are you liable? Explain.



(04 Marks)

(b) What is disaster recovery plan? How could it be implemented at your University or work?

(06 Marks)

(c) Explain the importance of security and control of information system?

(04 Marks)

(d) Identify several types of control strategies of information systems?

(04 Marks)

(Total 18 Marks)