

## **Information Technology in the Business World: Its Advantages and Disadvantages**

Communication technology is one of the most important aspects of information technology for the people around the world. It has changed human life by making it easier for us to communicate with each other, which makes the world seem like a small village. People now communicate with each other in different ways in comparison to the past. As a result, businesses have also changed and developed using communication technology. Companies using this technology experience both benefits and disadvantages. The discussion will be limited to this area. One of the advantages is that the Internet can help companies to communicate effectively with clients. In addition, companies can use communication technology to build good relationships with their customers. Now, most companies use a website to market their products and services and provide information about their business. Moreover, most companies use virtual communication to provide or exchange information. Conversely, communication technologies have many disadvantages. The first common disadvantage experienced in companies is that employees sometimes use company computers for dubious purposes. In addition, using the Internet in the workplace for an extended period could affect the health of employees. Further, mobile phones are not secure because of digital criminals.

The Internet helps companies to communicate effectively with their customers. It helps companies to save time and money by completing work online, such as online business deals and advertising their products. Research shows that companies who use the Internet develop faster than others do. In addition, many clients use the Internet to read about companies' products or services. According to Vallee (2002, p. 109), 'the whole world has access to your

products, in proportion to the access people have individually to the Internet'. The Internet is very useful for companies and helps to them to communicate with their clients.

The Internet can help companies to build good relationships with their customers. This can be achieved by sending emails to advertise new products so the customer believes that the company is interested in him or her and this will strengthen the interaction between them. Most customers prefer to deal with companies that give them attention. Kleindl (2002, p. 15) explains that 'businesses must learn to gain customers trust'. Thus, it can be concluded that companies can develop trusting relationships with customers by using the Internet.

Due to the evolution of information technology, most companies design a website to display company information, products and services. They encourage customers to visit their website to find information about new products or services and to provide a general idea about how the company works. Most of these websites allow customers to buy company products so the customer will save the time by ordering the products directly from the company. According to Vallee (1999, p. 74), 'the websites of most large businesses merely offer general information and job ads, with little else'. Overall, having a company website can be very useful.

Most large international companies find virtual communication to be very useful. They can use it to hold a virtual conference between companies in different countries at any time. Most companies find virtual communication helpful because it saves money and time. For example, companies who want to discuss a business deal would normally have to set a time and place to meet, but with a virtual communication, this is not necessary. Hurwitz (2009) considers that 'the reality is you can get away with a lot more in person than you can in a

virtual meeting. In an in-person meeting there is enough going on and enough possibilities of interaction that it works'. Therefore, virtual conferencing is useful for companies and businesses.

Despite the many advantages of information technology for businesses, there are also several significant disadvantages. The uncontrolled usage of computers in workplaces has many disadvantages that impede the progress of work. Many employees use companies' computers for dubious purposes. In addition, they may surf the Internet during office hours. Therefore, employees may not perform the work required of them in the limited time available. Caplan (2006, p. 64) explains that 'cyber loafing and personal web use may inhibit productivity'. The use of a computer in the workplace sometimes leads to a downturn in employee performance and productivity.

Using the Internet in the workplace for long periods could affect workers' health. It is a common problem among companies that employees use the Internet for a long time. Many of them suffer from different health and neurological problems caused by the Internet, such as problems with posture and tension, difficulty in breathing, problems in blood circulation and decreased eye health. In addition, if an employee develops one of these problems he or she will be less productive (Mcdowell 2001). According to Mcdowell (2001), 'those of us who sit at computer screens for long periods every day are already in danger of unsettling our health if this sort of activity is not balanced by a whole lot of contrasting activity. An addict is one who will concentrate their mind and body around one sort of activity to the exclusion of almost all others.' Overall, employees who sit in front of the computer screen for long periods could suffer adverse effects to their health.

Unsecure mobile phones have become a common problem for employees due to digital criminals. They target employees' mobile phones by using newly developed programs. These programs can bypass mobile phone security to steal important information and tamper with the contents of the phone. Moreover, these digital criminals can send the data to their computers or to other mobile phones. According to Dibben (2009, p. 27), 'if they responded, the criminals could then access phone users personal data and send it elsewhere'. Thus, hackers attack workers' mobile phones using new software to take important information.

This essay has argued that information technology has brought both advantages and disadvantages to businesses. Companies can communicate effectively with their customers using the Internet. Companies now try to build good relationships with their customers by using the Internet. Moreover, companies now design a website to attract people's attention and sell their products or services. Virtual communication is one of the most important things in the business arena today. Conversely, using information technology in business also has disadvantages that impede work and progress. For instance, employees use company computers for personal interests during working hours. Moreover, using the Internet for long periods could cause health problems. Further, mobile phones could be attacked by professional criminals.

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