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Office Automation System & The LAN

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Abstract: *Office automation refers to the varied computer machinery and software used to digitally create, collect, store, manipulate, and relay office information needed for accomplishing basic tasks. Raw data storage, electronic transfer and the management of electronic business information comprise the basic activities of an office automation system. Office automation helps in optimizing or automating existing office procedures. The backbone of office automation is a LAN, which allows users to transfer data, mail and even voice across the network. All office functions, switchboard operations fall into this category.*

Keywords: *“Lan”, “Automation”, “Software”, “office”, “Electronic Systems”*

1. INTRODUCTION

Office Automation System (OAS) are configuration of networked computer hardware and software. A variety of office automation system are now applied to business and communication functions that used to be performed manually or in multiple locations of a company, such as preparing written communications and strategic planning. In addition, functions that once required coordinating the expertise of outside specialists in typesetting, printing or electronic recording can now be integrated into the everyday work of an organisation, saving both time and money.

2. OFFICE AUTOMATION SYSTEM FUNCTIONS

Type of functions integrated by office automation system includes like electronic publishing; electronic communication; electronic collaboration; image processing and office management. At the heart of these systems is often a local area network (LAN). The LAN allows users to transmit data, voice, mail and images accross the network to any destination, whether that destination is in local office on the LAN or in another country through a connecting network. An office automation system makes office work more efficient and increases productivity.

a. Electronic Publishing

Electronic publishing systems include word processing and desktop publishing. Word processing software, allows users to create, edit, revise, store and print documents such as letters, memos, reports and manuscripts. Desktop publishing software enables users to integrate text, images, photographs and graphics to produce high quality printable output. Desktop publishing software is used on a microcomputer with a mouse, scanner and printer to create professional looking publications. These may be newsletters, brochures, magazines or books.

b. Electronic Communication

Electronic communication systems include electronicmail, facsimile and desktop video conferencing.

c. Electronic Mail

E-mail is software that allows users via their computer keywords, to create, send and receive messages and files to or from anywhere in the world. Most e-mail systems let the user to do other sophisticated tasks such as filter, prioritize or file messages; forward copies of messages to other users; create and save drafts of messages; send carbon copies and request automatic confirmation of the delivery of a message. E- mail is very popular because it is easy to use, offers fast delivery and is inexpensive. Examples of e-mail software are Lotus Notes and Microsoft Outlook.

d. Voice Mail

Voice mail is a sophisticated telephone answering machine. It digitizes incoming voice messages and stores them on disk. When the recipient is ready to listen, the message is converted from its digitized version back to audio or sound. Recipients may save message for future use, delete them or forward them to other people.

e. Facsimile

A facsimile or facsimile transmission machine scans a document containing both text and graphics and sends it as electronic signals over ordinary telephone lines to a receiving fax machine. This receiving fax recreates the image on paper. A fax can also scan and send a document to a fax modem inside a remote

computer. The fax can then be displayed on the computer screen and stored or printed out by the computer's printer.

f. Desktop Videoconferencing

Desktop videoconferencing is one of the fastest growing form of videoconferencing. Desktop videoconferencing requires a network and a desktop computer with special application software as well as a small camera installed on top of the monitor. Images of a computer from the desktop computer are captured and sent across the network to other computers and users that are participating in the conferencing. This type of video conferencing simulates face-to-face meeting of individuals.

g. Electronic Collaboration

Electronic collaboration is made possible through electronic meeting and collaborative work systems and teleconferencing (videoconferencing). Electronic meeting and collaborative work systems allows teams of co-workers to use networks of microcomputers to share information, update schedules and plans and co-operate on projects regardless of geographic distance. Special software called groupware is needed to allow two or more people to edit or work on the same files simultaneously.

h. Office Management

Office management systems include electronic office accessories, electronic scheduling and task management. These systems provides an electronic means of organising people, projects and data. Business dates, appointments, notes and client contacts information can be created, edited, stored and retrieved. Additionally, automatic reminders about crucial dates and appointments can be programmed. Projects and tasks can be allocated, subdivided and planned. All of these actions can either be done individually or for an entire group. Computerized systems that automate these office functions can dramatically increase productivity and improve communication with in an organisation.

i. Functions

Office functions usually related to managing information. There are many tools used to automate office functions and the spread of electronic processors inside computers as well as inside copiers and printers is at the centre of most recent advances in office automation. Raw data storage, electronic data transfer and the management of electronic business information comprise the basic activities of an office automation system.

3. CONSIDERATION: PEOPLE, TOOLS AND THE WORKPLACE

Business engaged in launching or upgrading office automation systems must consider a wide variety of factors that can influence the effectiveness of those systems. These factors include budgetary and physical space considerations and changes in communication infrastructure among others. But two other factors that must be considered are employee training and proliferating office automation choices.

•*TRAINING* - People involved with office automation, basically include all users of the automation and all providers of the automation systems and tools. A wide range of people- including software and hardware engineers, management information scientists, executives, mid-level workers and secretaries are just a few of the people that use office automation on a daily basis. As a result, training of personnel on these office automation systems has become an essential part of many companies' planning.

•**CHOICE** - An array of office automation alternatives are available to businesses of all shapes, sizes and subject areas. Primary factors that should be considered include: Cost of the system, length of time involved in introducing the system, physical condition of the facility into which the system will be introduced, level of technical support, compatibility with other systems, complexity and compatibility of the system with the business area in which the company is involved.

ADVANTAGES

- Office automation can get many tasks accomplished faster.
- It eliminates the need for a large staff.
- Less storage is required to store data.
- Multiple people can update data simultaneously in the event of changes in schedule.

4. CONCLUSION

Office Automation System consist of applications designed to help the daily work of the administration of an organisation, are part of this type of software the word processors, the leaves calculation, the editors of presentation, customer email etc. When several of these applications are grouped into a single software package for every distribution and installation, the set is known by the name of office suite. Today with the emergence of the philosophy of web 2.0 office suite are proliferating online, which are nothing more than applications that perform the same functions as the office automation system classic desktop, but available for use in any portal internet. These suites have the advantage that a user can work with the own documents from any computer connected to the internet, also in these systems is usually very easy to share documents, facilitating collaborative work.

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