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IT Discipline and its Relevance

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Information Technology is a new and rapidly growing field that started as a grassroots response to the practical, everyday needs of business and other organizations. Today, organizations of every kind are dependent on information technology. They need to have appropriate systems in place. These systems must work properly, be secure, and be upgraded, maintained, and replaced as appropriate. Employees throughout an organization require support from IT staff who understand computer systems and their software and are committed to solving whatever computer-related problems they might have. IT specialists assume responsibility for selecting hardware and software products appropriate for an organization, integrating those products with organizational needs and infrastructure, and installing, customizing, and maintaining those applications for the organization's computer users. Examples of these responsibilities include the installation of networks; network administration and security; the design of web pages; the development of multimedia resources; the installation of communication components; the oversight of email systems; and the planning and management of the technology lifecycle by which an organization's technology is maintained, upgraded, and replaced. Graduates of Information Technology programs address these needs. [1]

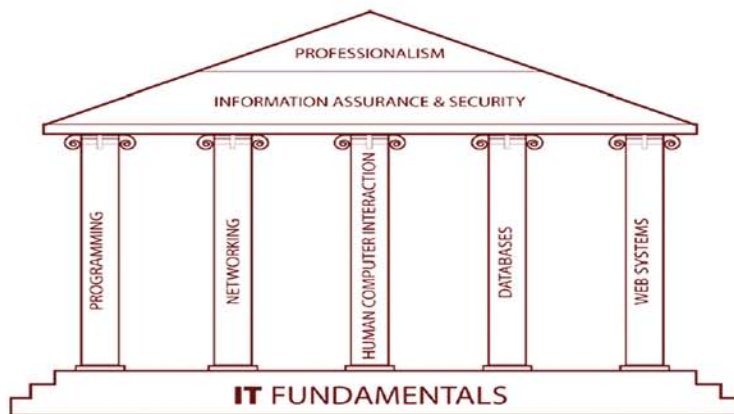


Figure: The Information Technology

There is no dispute regarding the need for IT professionals. Hence, choosing a career in IT is a valid option. The question is "Are we well equipped, by way of our education, to meet the challenges offered by IT profession?"

[1] "Information Technology 2008: Curriculum Guidelines for Undergraduate Programs in Information Technology". Document prepared by Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) and IEEE Society.

<http://www.acm.org/education/curricula.recommendations>

from HOD's desk

Build Individual effectiveness



Ms. Kuttyamma A.J.
Professor & HOD

The way in which you deal a situation is quite different from others. This difference is based on your individual difference as a human being. Your thinking, capabilities, attitude, psychological traits, strategies, way of execution, motivation, vision etc. are quite different. Hence your way of practicing things will be different from others, though your knowledge in theory and practice is as good as others or even better.

To be a successful and effective person one has to learn to manage his own personality and strength. One should find out or understand his strength and weakness. Effort must be made to strengthen the weak areas by hard work. It is essential to have fine turning of personality as part of academic courses. It is not the knowledge alone but the right mental makeup to apply the knowledge that is crucial.



In this fast changing world one has to accomplish large number of things in short time. There are various pressures to overcome and individual effectiveness determines the overall performance. To apply Common Sense, which is the most vital requirement in performance, your personality has to stay fit.

“Learning and innovation go hand in hand. The arrogance of success is to think that what you did yesterday will be sufficient for tomorrow.”

-William Pollard





ETHICAL, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL ISSUES IN AN INFORMATION SOCIETY

Ethics is the branch of philosophy which resolves what is right or wrong, good or bad. Ethics is not a new discipline. It began with Socrates, and it was one of the central interests of the two other Greek philosophers - Plato and Aristotle. Individuals, acting as free moral agents, use to make choices to guide their behaviors.

Ethics is an anxiety of humans who have freedom of choice. When faced with alternative courses of action, what is the correct moral choice? Information systems raise new ethical questions for both individuals and society because they create opportunities for deep social transform, and thus terrorize existing distributions of power, money, rights, and obligations.

Ethical issues in information systems have been given new urgency by the rise of the Internet and electronic commerce. Internet and digital firm technologies make it easier than ever to assemble, integrate, and distribute information, unleashing new concerns about the appropriate use of customer information, the protection of personal privacy, and the protection of intellectual property.

Ethical, social, and political issues are closely linked. The introduction of new information technology has a ripple effect, raising new ethical, social, and political issues that must be dealt with on the individual, social, and political levels. Social institutions cannot respond overnight to these ripples—it may take years to develop etiquette, expectations, social responsibility, politically correct attitudes, or approved rules. Political institutions also require time before developing new laws and often require the demonstration of real harm before they act. In the meantime, you may have to act. You may be strained to act in a legal gray region.

FIVE MORAL DIMENSIONS OF THE INFORMATION AGE

The major ethical, social, and political issues raised by information systems include the following moral dimensions:

Information Rights and obligations. What information rights do individuals and organizations own with respect to themselves? What can they protect? What obligations do individuals and organizations have concerning this information?

Property Rights and obligations. How will traditional intellectual property rights be protected in a digital society in which tracing and accounting for ownership is difficult and ignoring such property rights is so easy?

Accountability and control. Who can and will be held accountable and liable for the harm done to individual and collective information and property rights?

Quality. What standards of data and system quality should we demand to protect individual rights and the safety of society?

Morality of life. What values should be preserved in an information- and knowledge-based society? Which cultural values and practices are supported by the new information technology?



Security Issues of Social Networking Websites



Jose Joseph, Sr IT

Now-a-days social networking sites like Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Friendster, digg, Orkut, Twitter etc are becoming very popular. Social networking is the practice of expanding the number of one's business or social contacts by making connections through individuals. Web-based social networking occurs through a variety of websites that allow users to share content, interact and develop communities around similar interests. The social network phenomenon was born in the USA and developed around three main categories: professional links, friendship and love relations.

Security Issues

Social networking is offering a new world of friendships and business contacts. But there are many security problems associated with them. In social networking sites the members will share accurate personal information which can cause the very serious problem called Identity theft and the spammers can easily collect many email addresses.

The lack of physical contact makes it easier to build false profiles too, for example you think you are chatting with a CEO from somewhere while you're actually chatting with a completely different kind of person from a completely different place.

MySpace was one of the first social networking sites, and it's still one of the largest ones. Its sheer size has made it an obvious target for spammers, hackers, and online predators. MySpace is also a victim of its own business model, where the user controls his or her content and presentation. Users can add banners to their pages, and embed other Web technologies and links, so that there are many opportunities to link to dangerous things and to embed malware on the pages.

Facebook, now the first social networking site in the world, can be considered to have security problems similar to those of MySpace, but its approach is a bit different. In particular, Facebook relies on third party Java applications, so that the user is not only entrusting Facebook with her/his login and password but also must trust the third-party applications that provide tools for Facebook users. There is a potential danger that the code you're running on the site is malicious or points you to a site that contains malicious code.

Often Facebook applications are just "humorous time-wasters", like the ones that let you spray-paint graffiti on someone's wall, but there is also an increasing number of more serious, business-oriented applications: Professional Profile, for example, lets you post and edit your resume on Facebook, then track who views it. The downside to using Facebook applications is that you automatically grant the application's developers access to your profile, which poses a security risk.

An example of relatively recent malware appeared on Facebook is "Secret Crush": you receive a fake message saying a friend of yours has secretly fallen in love with you. To discover her/his identity, you're invited to install an application and tell your friends to do the same. The application then sends you undesired ads instead of revealing the identity of the person you were looking for.

Many attacks now have nothing to do with an exploit and vulnerabilities, they can be classified as "phishing", they're about persuading people to click a link.

So let's take a little care while dealing with social networking sites...

"Creativity is a type of learning process where the teacher and pupil are located in the same individual" - Arthur Koestler





Endeavours

1) ICT Grounded Modern Approaches in Knowledge Sharing: In the proceedings of the National Conference on Education & Research, ConfER-2009 held in March 2009 at Kochi.

Authors: Preetha K G, Saritha S

Abstract— Information and communication technology (ICT) can enhance knowledge sharing by lowering the barriers between knowledge workers, and improving access to information about knowledge. ICT tools, resources and services should be utilized in setting footprints in knowledge sharing, thus throwing more light in the field of learning and educating through knowledge management and sharing. A more encompassing perspective will come about if ICT is studied in relation to the motivation for knowledge sharing. This approach tries to explore the scope and effect of ICT on the motivation for knowledge sharing in different settings.

2) A Novel Learning Approach using Open Source Digital Library based on Social Networking: In the proceedings of the National Conference on Role of open source software in libraries held in December 2009 at CUSAT, Kochi.

Authors: Preetha K G, Nishanth P R

Abstract: Information and communication technology (ICT), especially computer and internet defines store, retrieve, manipulate, transmit or receive information. ICT resources and its tools have been developed rapidly and can be applied for teaching – learning and governance of organizations. The costs of implementation of the necessary copyright software are very high. Due to the rapid development of internet technology traditional library system has changed to digital library. Information retrieval is the key component and the fascinating area of digital library. This paper tries to explore the scope and effect of open source software (OSS) in digital library management and its sharing. This software can serve the needs of students and teachers of educational institutions through a social networking site.





Big Stories of 2009



Year 2009 saw Microsoft launch a series of products—Windows 7, Exchange Server 2010, Server 2008 R2, BPOS and Azure. This was termed as the “biggest launch wave in the company’s history.”

Ravi Swaminathan, President, HP PSG, who was often referred to by peers as the PC King, left HP after a stint of almost 15 years, first with Compaq and later with HP.

The central government’s decision to charge service tax on all kinds of software, and the state governments’ decision to continue collecting value added tax, is causing major problems for the software reselling industry.

HP retains the top position in the Indian PC market, vendors such as Acer and Dell have gained ground. HCL, which was the market leader for nearly a decade since the mid-nineties, and which started as a close second at the beginning of 2009, has slipped to the fourth spot. Intel and AMD settled several of their legal disputes in November 2009.

News @ 2010



Mercury Launches Surveillance Systems

Surveillance has been gaining grounds steadily in the corporate and public offices. SMBs and middle income groups are also catching up with the trend. Addressing this market opportunity, Kobian, the manufacturer of Mercury branded IT Peripherals, has forayed into surveillance camera market with standalone surveillance cameras. The product range—Espial—includes Infrared CCDs, dome and DSP box cameras.

Kobian’s prime focus is to reach and facilitate solution providers who deal in installation and support of such products. The company will offer right products, solution and service support. The company is reaching out to various construction houses, schools, hospitals and retailers with a complete solution.



Events of 2009

✧ A Talk was conducted on behalf of i-TRAX and ED club for encouraging the young entrepreneurs. The talk was delivered by S.R Nair (CEO, TeamFrontline Group of Companies)



✧ Department on Information Technology and Department of Computer Science hosted, the second National Conference on Education and Research on the theme "ICT for Inclusive Development and Sustainable Growth" during 11-14th March 2009 organized by CSI Division -V (Education and Research) in association with IEEE Computer Society Kerala Section.



✧ A one week programme was organized by 'Rajagiri Centre for Continuing Education' for school students on Hardware Components of a computer, Operating System Installation, Familiarization with Windows, Linux, Solaris and PC Assembling & Networking from 18th -22nd May 2009.



✧ Department of Computer Science & Engineering and Department of Information Technology organized a one day workshop [6th June 2009] on Computer Fundamentals for women in rural areas of Thrikkakara in association with Thrikkakara Grama Panchayath. 22 women took part in the programme.



✧ Web Course on Eclipse was conducted on 24th July and 21st August 2009 at Multimedia Hall for Seventh Semester CS and IT students. The course instructor was Mr. Suresh Krishna, working with Oracle at San Francisco at Utilities division with primary focus on frameworks and tools.



✧ i-TRAX conducted a 3 day workshop on "Photoshop" on 15th, 16th and 17th of September 09. The workshop was conducted after regular classes, from 4.45 PM to 5.45 PM. The proposed number of seats was 15 and the targeted participants were students from all branches, except first year students.



✧ i-TRAX conducted a "Treasure Hunt" on 26th November 09 for the first year students. The Winners are: Early Bird (Team explored the Treasure) - Aswin Thomas, Aju, Deepak Dinesh(S1S2-B). Highest score(Quiz) - Dennis Mathew, Amritha Prabhu, Allen Jacob(S1S2-C).





On Creative Desk
Prof. Kuttiyamma A J
Ms. Dhanya Sudharshan
Mr. Krishnadas Naduvath
Mr. Mathew Jacob
Mr. Ashwana Kurian

