

OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

Chapter 10, Information Distribution

Information is a critical asset in today's business organization, and the procedures involved in the internal and external distribution of information are of prime importance to organizations.

A. BASIC PRINCIPLES OF INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION

Information is a valuable resource and successful management and distribution is a critical issue. We must deal with a multitude of different types of information through numerous paths and routes.

Guidelines for Information Distribution

- Condition of the information: if the information is not in a usable condition or format, the information is of no value until it can be converted to the format required.
- Internal and external distribution procedures must be established.
- Speed of transmission must be distributed rapidly enough that the contents are still current and applicable.
- Accuracy of information is vital.
- Distribution costs are determined by volume, urgency, and especially the means of transmission.

Criteria for Selecting Information Distribution Means

- Type of information to be distributed.
- Speed of transmission desired.
- Format of the information.
- Effect of peak work periods.
- Cost of information distribution.

Check Point A

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| <p>1. Computer technology facilitates many business applications today in creating a relatively new asset known as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A) capitalB) managementC) informationD) investment | <p>2. The receiver of information being distributed must be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A) file the information for future useB) apply the information to business tasks to be performedC) critique the information to determine its present valueD) convert the information to a useful form |
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| <p>3. The cost of distributing information depends most on the</p> <p>A) accuracy of the information being transmitted</p> <p>B) application of the information to a specific task</p> <p>C) nature of the information</p> <p>D) means by which the information is transmitted</p> | |
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B. INTERNAL INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION

Types of information services for internal distribution include intranet, a telephone communication system, and/or an interoffice mail system. Internal mail distribution includes email, intranet bulletins, telephone and voice messaging, and interoffice correspondence.

- Intranet system is a company or departmental internal network. When using it to access information stored on the network or to transmit an email message, the LAN is used.
 - Electronic mail.
 - Intranet notices.
- Telephone communication system
 - Voice messages help reduce telephone tag and are dependent on the quality of the information being recorded.
 - Telephone messages must be accurate & complete for the receiver to respond appropriately.
- Interoffice communication
 - Interoffice correspondence format is usually in memorandum form.
 - Face-to-face communication is beneficial if there needs to be some discussion about the matter.

Check Point B

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| <p>1. The basic premise of a local area network is to</p> <p>A) make information quickly available to people on the network</p> <p>B) increase the amount of hard-copy information flowing through the office</p> <p>C) send identical messages to every employee throughout the company at the same time</p> <p>D) establish guidelines for the use of email throughout the organization</p> | <p>2. Which one of the following would be the most helpful practice to use in curbing “telephone tag?”</p> <p>A) leaving recorded messages with date, time, name of caller, and nature of call</p> <p>B) sending information requests through interoffice correspondence</p> <p>C) implementing a voice-mail system</p> <p>D) installing a local area network to facilitate interoffice communication</p> |
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| <p>3. The sender who is transmitting information of a critical nature regarding a particular business function may prefer to use which one of the following channels?</p> <p>A) electronic mail B) express mail service C) voice mail message D) face-to-face communication</p> | |

C. EXTERNAL INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION

Mail services, private messenger and delivery services, and telecommunications are the primary means of externally distributing information.

- Mail services include ZIP + 4 to enable mail to be sorted and delivered faster and more accurately. Bar codes enable mail to be processed more quickly.
- Procedures for incoming mail vary from business to business but most include sorting, date stamping, logging, and stacking by priority.
- Procedures for outgoing mail must be classified and grouped according to the type and destination.
 - Categories of outgoing mail
 - Express mail is the fastest delivery service which guarantees next day or second day delivery.
 - Global Express Guaranteed (GXG) is for international expedited shipping.
 - Priority mail is delivered within two or three days. Maximum weight allowance is 70 pounds and maximum size is no more than 108 inches in length and distance around the thickest part combined.
 - First-class mail is for items not requiring the highest priority. The maximum weight is 13 ounces.
 - Periodicals are sent to those on a subscription list and delivered at least four times per year.
 - Standard mail includes two subclasses. Subclass A is for mail less than 16 ounces. Subclass B is for mail more than one pound. The minimum quantity of standard mail is 200 pieces or 50 pounds.
 - Package services is intended for catalogs, merchandise, and other printed material and is divided into four subclasses:
 - Parcel post
 - Bound printed matter
 - Media mail
 - Library mail
- Other postal services
 - Airmail – for international distances greater than 250 miles.

- Special delivery/special handling – for items that require preferential handling.
- Registered mail – protection for valuable items, money, checks, jewelry, bonds, and stock certificates. Packages are insured up to \$25,000.
- Insured mail – offers coverage up to \$500 against loss or damage.
- Certificate of mailing – serves as proof of mailing.
- Certified mail – first class mail with no dollar value can be sent as certified mail and provides proof of mailing and delivery.
- Collect-on-delivery (COD) – a COD fee is collected from the buyer in cash or personal check. The maximum amount allowed is \$1,000.
- International mail – customs declarations forms may be necessary for specific contents within the package.
- Mailgrams – an electronic message forwarded from Western Union.
- Web tools are available online at www.usps.com and include:
 - Domestic rate calculator.
 - International rate calculator.
 - Track/confirm status.
 - Address information.
- Private messenger or delivery services are common in larger cities.
- Telecommunication systems have expanded from telegrams and mailgrams to the Internet and include:
 - Western Union services
 - Telegrams
 - Mailgrams
 - Money transfers
 - Bill payments and money orders
 - International messages
 - Telephone technology
 - Telephone communication
 - Procedures for telephone usage
 - Voice mail
 - Facsimile (fax) transmission
 - Internet - websites and external electronic communication are the most prevalent uses.
 - Electronic mail
 - Email technology – networks have enabled administrative professionals to more quickly and easily process and transmit information. Email has become the primary method of sharing information throughout business organizations.
 - Email procedures – questions to ask. Is the message information only? Does it require a response? Is additional information required? When should it be deleted from your inbox?

- Netiquette practices are etiquette practices for the electronic environment. Emails should always include the following:
 - Descriptive subject line.
 - Avoid all caps.
 - Abbreviations and emotion icons should be avoided or used at a minimum in business email.
 - Never send spam.
 - Never forward personal information without permission from the sender.
 - When using reply, sometimes responses are color coded or highlighted in some way to indicate the response.
- Employers' right to monitor email is based on the concern for sending proprietary information, employee productivity, and employer legal liability. Big brother is watching us! Warning - password keystroke detection software can also be used by your employer to retrieve your private information. It is best to refrain from using the Internet at your place of employment to complete tasks such as personal banking, paying your bills, keying in credit card information and security codes, checking personal email accounts, etc. It is best to wait and complete these tasks from home.
- Websites communicate information using text, hypermedia, graphics, and sound. The first page of a website is registered on the World Wide Web (WWW) through a Web address - - a uniform resource locator (URL).

Check Point C

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| <p>1. A newspaper that is mailed once a month to a list of subscribers would be classified as</p> <p>A) first-class mail B) parcel post C) standard mail D) periodicals</p> | <p>2. One of the primary reasons for applying electronic communication to both external and internal business communication is to</p> <p>A) transmit information as quickly as possible B) increase the quantity of hard-copy documentation created C) set priorities for information distribution D) concentrate on domestic services available for the transmission of information</p> |
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| <p>3. Which one of the following business practices illustrates the application of netiquette?</p> <p>A) the most important points in an email message should be keyed in all caps</p> <p>B) emotion icons should be used only in informal communication</p> <p>C) a response to an original message should be keyed after the original message</p> <p>D) chain letters may be forwarded as long as they do not interfere with business communication</p> | |
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Chapter Review

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| <p>1. Information that is not in a usable format is of value only if</p> <p>A) the information is needed immediately</p> <p>B) available as a hard copy</p> <p>C) transmitted electronically</p> <p>D) converted to the format required</p> | <p>2. The transmission of information must take place quickly enough for the information to be</p> <p>A) transmitted electronically</p> <p>B) current enough to meet the needs of the receiver</p> <p>C) distributed internally and externally</p> <p>D) available as hard or soft copy</p> |
| <p>3. In addition to transmitting information as needed, it is important that the information be</p> <p>A) accurate in expressing facts, data, and opinions</p> <p>B) distributed internally</p> <p>C) critiqued by an administrator</p> <p>D) distributed externally</p> | <p>4. Information that includes statistical data may be distributed best in a/an</p> <p>A) telephone message</p> <p>B) email message</p> <p>C) written memorandum or letter</p> <p>D) face-to-face conversation</p> |
| <p>5. Which one of the following means would be appropriate for transmitting informal information that is needed within a few minutes?</p> <p>A) a letter sent by express mail</p> <p>B) an appointment for a face-to-face discussion</p> <p>C) a short report to be faxed the next morning</p> <p>D) an email message</p> | <p>6. An organization may need to do which one of the following to handle information processing during a peak season?</p> <p>A) inform clients of a slowdown in response time</p> <p>B) increase working hours for staff</p> <p>C) purchase a new computer system to speed up the process</p> <p>D) streamline procedures to handle the extra work load</p> |

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| <p>7. The intranet is an organization's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) external electronic network permitting employees access to Internet capabilities B) telephone communication system equipped with voicemail messaging C) internal electronic network for communicating information to employees D) system for handling interoffice correspondence | <p>8. Reducing the number of hard copies needed in the office is the main purpose of a/an</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) telephone communication system B) Internet web server C) mail distribution system D) electronic mail system |
| <p>9. Which of the following is a major difficulty in relying on telephone communication?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) reaching the desired receiver with the information needed B) leaving a telephone message with call back information C) practicing appropriate telephone etiquette D) leaving a good impression with the receiver | <p>10. When leaving an appropriate telephone message, the caller needs to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) provide a detailed message with all the information needed B) reference a previous call or message left C) plan the message in advance in case the receiver is not available D) access any pertinent information that needs to be shared |
| <p>11. Transmitting information face to face is best when</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) the receiver will be receptive to the information B) the information is critical to a particular business function or operation C) a quick "yes" or "no" response is needed D) only one specific topic needs to be discussed | <p>12. The ZIP + 4 Code consists of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) classifications of domestic mail within the United States B) five digits representing global areas plus four digits for local delivery routes C) bar codes imprinted on envelopes D) five digits representing areas of the United States plus four digits for local delivery routes |

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| <p>13. Which one of the following statements represents an appropriate procedure for handling incoming mail?</p> <p>A) a paper trail must be created for mail that contains payments in the form of checks or cash</p> <p>B) payments received need to be credited immediately by the administrative professional who sorts the mail</p> <p>C) informing mail is forwarded to a manager or executive for opening, dating, and time stamping</p> <p>D) the date the mail is received is considered less important than the date of the correspondence</p> | <p>14. The domestic mail delivery service that guarantees next-day and second-day delivery for items weighing up to 70 pounds is</p> <p>A) priority mail</p> <p>B) express mail</p> <p>C) first-class mail</p> <p>D) standard mail</p> |
| <p>15. A statement of account mailed to a domestic client would be considered</p> <p>A) priority mail</p> <p>B) standard mail</p> <p>C) first-class mail</p> <p>D) express mail</p> | <p>16. The R-D Furniture Outlet sends four-page flyers to a mailing list of local area customers once a month. These flyers, weighing approximately 4 ounces each, would be classified as</p> <p>A) standard mail - A</p> <p>B) periodicals</p> <p>C) package services</p> <p>D) standard mail - B</p> |
| <p>17. An R-D Furniture Outlet catalog is prepared once a year for distribution to customers. If these catalogs are mailed out, they will be classified as</p> <p>A) standard mail - A</p> <p>B) periodicals</p> <p>C) standard mail - B</p> <p>D) package services</p> | <p>18. The Illinois Division of the International Association of Administrative Professionals mails a membership directory to every Illinois chapter once a year. Which of the following statements is true about this type of mailing?</p> <p>A) the ID president can enclose a short personal message</p> <p>B) the directory can consist of unbound pages</p> <p>C) a letter on ID letter head cannot be included with the mailing</p> <p>D) a printed form for updating addresses can be enclosed with the directory</p> |

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| <p>19. Ramirez needs to send stock certificates for 100 shares of stock to her sister. Which one of the following postal services would be best for sending the certificates?</p> <p>A) special delivery B) registered mail C) certified mail D) insured mail</p> | <p>20. The delivery status of any package shipped by Priority Mail™ through the U.S. Postal Service can be determined by</p> <p>A) contacting the local U.S. Post Office B) checking the postal receipt for the mailing C) calculating the shipping cost for the package D) accessing the delivery confirmation web tool at the U.S. Postal Service website</p> |
| <p>21. Skolowski needs to transfer \$2,000 to her cousin Warzawski in Prague, Poland. Which one of the following methods would provide the fastest service?</p> <p>A) Global Priority Mail™ B) Global Express Mail™ C) Western Union’s money-transfer service D) registered mail</p> | <p>22. What does a person generally expect will happen when leaving a telephone message?</p> <p>A) the information will be transmitted correctly to the called person B) the called person will promptly return the call C) the message will be forwarded to someone else for response D) a voicemail network will be less effective in delivering the message</p> |
| <p>23. A major advantage in receiving messages through a voicemail network is that</p> <p>A) copies of documents can quickly be sent B) the receiver does not have to record the message or make notes C) the written message is transmitted promptly from an intermediary D) the called person receives and hears the message exactly as recorded</p> | <p>24. If an email message requires a response from someone else, the administrative professional should</p> <p>A) forward the message to the person who should respond to it B) place a copy of the message in an electronic file folder marked “For Your Information” C) reply to the email by letting the original sender know who will be writing the response D) seek additional information before responding</p> |

25. A number of employers are beginning to monitor employees' email usage during company time because they are concerned about the

- A) number of employees who are using email for company business
- B) information contained in email messages that are being transmitted on company time
- C) deletion of email messages from intranets
- D) increased productivity of employees when using email systems