

# Chapter 9: Software for Business Applications

## Overview

This chapter discusses various applications software options and their associated features. Students may have used one or more of these types of applications, and they may be able to offer some information into the discussion. Be sure students review the many lists and illustrations in this chapter; they are key to distinguishing among the different types of software.

## Lecture Notes

### A. Types of Application Software

This type of software is used for daily operations within an organization to improve office productivity.

1. **Application Specific Software** is developed for business operations; usually designed by in-house programmers or purchased from vendors. Cross-industry application software can be used by many different types of companies; however, industry-specific application software is designed for specific industries.
  - a. Accounting applications include options for accounts receivable, accounts payable, payroll, and general accounting.
  - b. Marketing applications are used for product development, pricing, and promotion functions.
  - c. Financial applications assist firms as they identify sources of funding and acquire funding to support their business operations.
  - d. Operations functions might include CAD/CAM, inventory, distribution, and quality control functions.
  - e. Human resource applications help organizations manage recruiting, staffing, and training.
2. **Enterprise Integration** software focuses on supporting clusters of business processes involved in daily operations.
  - a. Enterprise systems include modules for applications in various areas and provide cross-functional data combined from the different areas.
    - Enterprise data
    - Vendor support
  - b. Enterprise integration software is used for decision making.
    - Middleware
    - Enterprise application integration software
3. **General Purpose Application Software** performs basic tasks for the user; programs are common for business and home use. They are often referred to as productivity packages.
  - a. Word processing is one of the most popular types of packages; it is used to create, edit, revise, format, and print documents that include a lot of text.

- b. Spreadsheet software creates electronic worksheets that calculate, sort, or analyze numeric data.
  - c. Database management software is used to record and file information so that it can be used for queries, reports, and mailings.
  - d. Graphics software is used to create graphs and charts, as well as presentation graphics.
4. **Software Procurement** options are explored to meet the needs of the organization in a cost-effective manner.
- a. Custom-designed software is developed and maintained in-house, or it is leased or purchased from a vendor who is responsible for maintenance.
  - b. Off-the-shelf software is a general-purpose application; it comes with support materials and help services.
  - c. An application service provider leases software to organizations through the Internet or a private network. The ASP manages all applications and computing services.

## B. Using General Purpose Application Software

*Students will probably be very familiar with this portion of the chapter. Be sure that they pay attention to details.*

1. **Software Suites and Integrated Packages** provide word processing, spreadsheets, database management, and graphic programs packaged together.
- a. There are some functional differences between a suite and integrated package. A suite includes complete versions of each program; an integrated package has a scaled-down version of each package and doesn't have the same power.
  - b. Common functions include setting defaults, commands, revisions, and other menu and toolbar utilities.
2. **Data Integrity** is an important consideration, especially in spreadsheets and databases. Integrity is increased when ONE set of data is available to all departments instead of repeated in many places. *Remind students that maintaining integrity and accuracy is everyone's job.*
3. The **Active Window** is the window that is currently open or on top. The title bar identifies the application to keep track of which one is which (if more than one is open at a time).
- a. A menu bar is below the title bar; it includes a variety of functions from each menu.
  - b. A toolbar is a graphical representation (icons, buttons, boxes) of commonly used features.
  - c. A dialog box displays information to users or provides a place for the user to provide information to the program to move forward.
  - d. A Help menu is available for asking questions about software features and functions.

4. **Word Processing** software is used to create, edit, revise, format, save, and print text-based documents. *The text provides a detailed list of options available when using word processing applications. Be sure students are familiar with those functions.*

- a. Default values provide a standard format by which all new documents are created.
- b. Choosing commands in a WYSIWYG (What you see is what you get) format helps make choices.
- c. Word processing features are numerous (*review list on pp. 197–200*).
- d. Merging documents for mass mailing; a data (variable) file can be used over and over with different main (constant) documents to automate the task.
- e. Multi-page document formatting choices are available (*review list on pp. 201–202*).
- f. Format documents when default options need to be changed for the entire document or parts of it.
- g. Tables can be designed to organize information.
- h. Formatting text in columns gives a newspaper appearance.
- i. Macros are helpful to automate tasks that are performed repeatedly.
- j. Protect/unprotect features can determine who can view a document and who can make changes to it.
- k. Page orientation can be set to portrait (default, 8 ½ x 11) or landscape (11 x 8 ½).
- l. Printing can be accomplished by clicking a button on the toolbar or customized by opening the Print dialog box.

5. **Spreadsheet Software** creates an electronic version of a worksheet for data analysis. *The text provides a detailed list of options available when using spreadsheet applications. Be sure students are familiar with those functions.*

- a. Spreadsheet features assist in creating worksheets (*review list on pp. 204–209*).
- b. Data can be formatted with various number types and page setup options (*review list on pp. 209–211*).
- c. Macros automate tasks that are performed repeatedly.
- d. The protect/unprotect options are helpful when multiple people view a worksheet and changes need to be monitored.
- e. Page orientation can be set to portrait (default, 8 1/2 x 11) or landscape (11 x 8 1/2).
- f. Print options should be selected before a worksheet is printed.
- g. Graphs/charts can be created based on worksheet data.

6. **Database Management** software is used to collect data for easy retrieval, creating documents, and queries.

- a. Administrative professionals should be able to utilize a database and its features (*review list on pp. 213–216*).
  - b. Data formats are set in the table structure design view.
  - c. Queries allow users to extract and print data that meets specifications set.
  - d. Reports present output in a formal format (*review list on p. 217*).
  - e. Forms are used for data entry; the form includes a header, detail, footer, and any graphic elements.
  - f. Automatic correction and format options are available to speed up tasks.
  - g. Macros include a set of actions that are used for common tasks.
  - h. Print options are available to print information from tables, queries, reports, and forms.
7. **Graphics Applications** are used to create graphs or presentation graphics.
- a. Graphs/charts can be created in spreadsheet software to enhance the presentation of data. (*Review the list and accompanying illustrations on pp. 219-221.*)
  - b. Presentation software is very popular for visual aids in business presentations with various tools and formatting options. The software allows users to view the presentation in different modes depending on what they are working on at the time.
8. **Software for Other Business Applications** can be very useful.
- a. Desktop publishing software is used to combine computer technology with word processing, graphics, and page layout. (*Remind students about the information presented in Chapter 6.*)
  - b. Web browsers are used to easily navigate the World Wide Web. The browser may also be used along with other application software or coordination tools.
  - c. Groupware supports collaboration within and among work groups for word processing, e-mail, meetings, and scheduling.

## C. Configuration, Implementation, and Management

1. **Configuration** – Computers need to be configured to work with the network, intranet(s), and/or the Internet.
  - a. Information Technology (IT) personnel are responsible for the task, but users need to understand their requirements.
  - b. End-user development is an issue of concern because of the computer power that users hold.
  - c. Outsourcing is contracting with someone for some or all of the computer operations.
2. **Implementation** is part of the information systems life cycle.
  - a. Implementation for enterprise applications includes formal review by end-users; it includes testing, conversion, training, and documentation.

- b. Implementation for end-user applications includes testing, conversion, training, and documentation.
- 3. **Management** is a joint responsibility of the IT personnel and end-users.
  - a. System maintenance includes monitoring (trouble log), evaluating (output), and modifying the system on a regular basis to improve the use and effectiveness of the system.
  - b. Organizations change based on government, technology, and the desire to remain competitive in their industry.

### **Additional Resources for Students**

Recommended readings (no texts should be more than two years old):

- Groneman, N. and J. Meroney. *Information Systems Applications, Evaluation, and Selection*. South-Western Publishing Co.
- Long, Larry and Nancy Long. *Introduction to Computers and Information Systems*. Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Meyer, Marilyn and Roberta Baber. *Computers in Your Future*.
- Norton, Peter. *Introduction to Computers*.
- O’Leary, Timothy J. and Linda L. O’Leary. *Computing Essentials*. McGraw-Hill.
- Regan, Elizabeth A. and Bridget N. O’Connor. *Automating the Office – Office Systems and End-User Computing*. Macmillan City.
- Shelly, Gary and Thomas Cashman. *Learning to Use: Microcomputer Applications*. Boyd and Fraser Publishing Co.
- Tilton, R., J. Jackson, and S. Rigby. *The Electronic Office: Procedures and Administration*. South-Western Publishing Co.

Current issues of periodicals or business publications are also an excellent resource. Some of the following periodicals have an accompanying Web site.

<b>Current Periodical</b>	<b>Web Address</b>
<i>Gregg Reference Manual</i>	
<i>IAAP Complete Office Handbook</i>	<a href="http://www.iaap-hq.org/products/handbook.htm">http://www.iaap-hq.org/products/handbook.htm</a>
<i>Modern Office Technology</i>	
<i>OfficePro</i>	<a href="http://www.iaap-hq.org/officepro/toc.htm">http://www.iaap-hq.org/officepro/toc.htm</a>

*PC Computing*

*PC Magazine*            <http://www.pcmag.com>

*The Office*

Additionally, the following Web sites may provide up-to-date information:

*Computer World*        <http://www.computerworld.com>

*C-Net*                    <http://news.com.com/>

*Wired*                    <http://www.wired.com/>

*ZDNet*                    <http://www.zdnet.com/zdnn/>