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SMIS Members: A Membership Analysis

By: Leslie Ball
Richard Harris

Abstract

This article discusses the results of a survey of SMIS members. Members were asked to respond to questions regarding demographics, their satisfaction with SMIS services, and the importance of eighteen management issues which MIS management might address. The article presents percentage results of individual questions and interprets the results of those questions. No attempt is made to use any bivariate statistics in this article. All questions asked on the survey are presented in this article.

Keywords: SMIS, issues, needs, SMIS services
ACM Categories: 2.2

Thirteen years ago the Society for Management Information Systems was founded. The basic assumption of the founding members was that there were approximately one hundred information systems executives in the country who might be interested in getting together to exchange ideas and to discuss mutual concerns.

Much has changed since that first gathering. The membership now numbers nearly 1100 individual members from the business, government, and educational sectors, as well as over 100 institutional members. Institutional members can delegate up to five persons as members of SMIS.

SMIS publishes a quarterly journal, *MIS Quarterly*, which contains research and practical articles addressed to its membership. A newsletter, *The Members Forum*, is published monthly and contains information about the activities of local chapters and other newsworthy topics. In addition to these services, an annual conference is held each September, an institutional members' conference is held in March, and an information systems research conference is sponsored in December.

All of these services have evolved as they have in many other professional groups through the hard work of the leadership at the time that the service was proposed. Although little was known about the actual needs of the membership, these services were perceived as being needed by SMIS leadership.

Background for the Study

In late 1980 the authors conducted a membership survey at the request of SMIS. Approximately 1400 questionnaires were mailed to all charter, regular, academic, and student members. This represented the entire membership at that time. Responses totaled 417 which is a 29.8% response rate. When one considers that the respondents tend to be executives in middle and upper management and that the questionnaire required twenty to thirty minutes to fill out, the response rate is relatively high. In addition, a large number of respondents took the time to add additional comments about several issues. One conclusion that can be drawn is that the members are greatly concerned about the direction of SMIS

and are willing to commit some time to express those concerns.

This article is a presentation of the results of that survey. First, we will describe the population of respondents and then we will describe the important needs and issues that these people are facing, as well as the role that they would like SMIS to play in satisfying those needs and issues.

Before reviewing the data, let us explain what this article will not attempt to do. We make no claims that these results represent the needs and issues facing the entire information systems industry. We also do not claim that they can accurately represent the needs and issues facing all SMIS members. Our only claim is that these results represent the concerns of 417 individuals who took the time to respond to the questionnaire, whose primary job is in information systems, and who are members of SMIS. As with most sampling surveys we do hope that these comments reflect the general attitudes of all members rather than just the sample group.

The results reported in this article do not contain any sophisticated statistics. Most of the data shown here is simply a report of percentage responses. Percentages are calculated for each question after the "No Responses" have been eliminated. Any implications drawn are those of the authors and have not been tested for statistical significance.

Findings

Demographics

Sex, Residences, and Age

The first question that was asked is "Who are members of SMIS?" As might be expected, they are predominately male. Of the people responding to this question, 383 (94.1%) were male and only 24 (5.9%) were female. This result implies that the industry has been rather slow in promoting females to management positions.

When we look at the geographical distribution of the respondents, no particular pattern evolves. However, twelve states had no respondents but seven states accounted for 222 responses (see Table 1) which is 49.9% of those responding to this question. While this distribution does not parallel the population or industrial distribution of the country, it does suggest something about SMIS. As national headquarters are in Chicago, it is not surprising that over 11% of all responses came from Illinois. Also, while Minnesota might not be an industrial giant of a state and we suspect that it have more wildlife than people, it is the home of the University of Minnesota's Management Information Systems Research Center which is a co-sponsor of the *MIS Quarterly* and has been very involved in SMIS

Table 1. States With Most Respondents

State	#	%
Illinois	45	11.1
New Jersey	37	9.1
Pennsylvania	35	8.6
California	32	7.9
New York	27	6.7
Minnesota	24	5.9
Massachusetts	22	5.4
Total of Top Seven States	222	54.7

since its inception. Other states which make up the top seven states should be expected.

Few of the respondents are very old, and even fewer are very young. As shown in Table 2, 22% are 50+ years old, and only 5.3% are less than thirty. This leaves 72.7% in the 30 to 49 category which is fairly evenly split between the 30 to 39 and 40 to 49 categories. Average age works out to be 42 years old which would seem to indicate a fairly youthful organization that should have a great deal of vitality.

Education

The respondents could be considered to be very well educated. Table 3 shows that 60.3% have Masters or Doctoral degrees. While we have no evidence to prove it, this appears to be very high. If one were to compare these results to the educational level of other managers in other professional organizations we would hypothesize

that one would find fewer advanced degrees. One explanation might be that the jobs in the information systems industry typically require a level of technical training that often requires advanced degrees. Also, worthy of note is that an astonishing 92.9% have completed college.

A large number of respondents have their highest degree in Business/Accounting. As seen in Table 4, 42.7% of the respondents fall into this category. While it might appear to be surprising that only 16.8% have degrees in Management Information Systems, this major has only been offered for a few years and is, as yet, offered only in a few institutions. Although degrees in Computer Science have been offered longer than degrees in Management Information Systems, the small number of respondents with Computer Science Degrees (3.4%) might be attributed to the fact that this degree tends to be very technical and does not generally offer room for the student to take management and other

Table 2. Age Of Respondents

Age	#	%
Under 25	1	0.2
25 - 29	21	5.1
30 - 39	152	37.2
40 - 49	145	35.5
50 - 59	75	18.3
Over 59	15	3.7
No Response	8	-

Table 3. Highest Education Level Achieved

Education Level	#	%
Did not complete high school	0	-
Completed high school	29	7.1
Completed four year college	134	32.7
Completed masters degree	184	44.9
Completed doctoral degree	63	15.4
No response	7	-

Table 4. Highest College Degree Achieved

Degree	#	%
Management Information Systems	64	16.8
Business/Accounting	163	42.7
Computer Science	13	3.4
Engineering	42	11.0
Education	8	2.1
Liberal Arts	37	9.7
Other	55	14.4
No Degree	19	-
No Response	16	-

business courses which are often necessary to move ahead in management. It could very well be that several have Computer Science Undergraduate Degrees with their advanced degrees in Business. Finally, the other responses are in line with what we might have expected.

Salaries and Positions Held

When asked about salaries, the largest number of no responses in the personal information section occurred. Twenty-three respondents elected not to share this information with us (Table 5). Of those that responded, the salaries seem to be fairly evenly distributed around a mean of approximately \$46,000. Nearly 40% earn more than \$50,000 per year and 1.5% earn less than \$20,000. Those in the lowest category are likely to be students.

The question, "How many years has your principal job been in some information systems function?" yielded a response with a mean of 14.1 years with a standard deviation of 7.53. This large standard deviation indicates that the distribution is very wide. A summary of these responses is found in Table 6. It is interesting to note that a large number of responses occurred at 10, 12, 15, 20, 25, and 30 years. This appears to be the result of estimating the number of years rather than providing a true figure.

Although the average respondent has been working in information systems for 14.1 years, the respondent has been in the current position only 3.0 years on average. As might be expected in this industry, few have been in their current posi-

tion very long (Table 7). A total of 68.0% have been in their current positions five years or less, with the largest number being in their current positions for one year or less (20.1%).

These positions are generally, 64.1% of the time, in top or upper management. (Refer to part 3, question 5, of the Appendix.) However, if you drop educators, educational administrators, and students from the sample, then 70.4% are considered to be in top and upper middle management (see Table 8). This is the audience that SMIS was originally targeted at and it appears that SMIS is still on target.

Table 9 shows that the respondents' primary area of functional responsibility is in General MIS Management (44.8%). The relatively new position of Information Resource Management was reported by 31 respondents, or 7.5% of the sample. The 46 that categorize their functional area of responsibility as Education/Training appear to be a different set of people than the 22 educators and 7 educational administrators. This might be attributed to the number of persons who are involved in education in non-academic environments.

Professional Development

SMIS is not the only organization that most of the respondents belong to. ACM is the most popular with 26.3% of the respondents belonging to ACM as reported in Table 10. DPMA also seems to be quite popular (18.4%) with TIMS/ORSA (13.8%) and ASM (11.2%) showing modest popularity. The engineering societies, IEEE and

Table 5. Salaries

Salary Level	#	%
Under \$20,000	6	1.5
\$20,000 - \$29,999	48	12.2
\$30,000 - \$39,999	87	22.1
\$40,000 - \$49,999	99	25.8
\$50,000 - \$79,999	112	28.4
\$80,000 or Over	42	10.9
No Response	23	-

Table 6. Years That Principal Job Has Been In Information Systems

Years	#	%
0 - 5	61	15.2
6 - 10	74	18.4
11 - 15	111	27.6
16 - 20	88	21.9
21 - 25	44	10.9
26 - 30	17	4.2
31 - 35	6	1.5
36 - 40	1	0.2

Table 7. Years In Current Position

Years	#	%
0	5	1.2
1	78	18.9
2	69	16.7
3	57	13.8
4	36	8.7
5	36	8.7
6 - 10	82	19.9
11 - 15	39	9.4
16 - 20	5	1.2
Over 20	6	1.5

Table 8. Categories Of Current Position

Position	#	%	% Without * Items
Top Management	114	27.7	30.4
Upper Middle Management	150	36.4	40.0
Middle Management	63	15.3	16.8
First Line Management	9	2.2	2.4
Senior Staff Professional or Technical Member	31	7.5	8.3
Junior Staff Professional or Technical member	8	1.9	2.1
* Educator	22	5.3	-
* Educational Administrator	7	1.7	-
* Student	8	1.9	-
No Response	5	-	-

Table 9. Area Of Primary Responsibility

Responsibility Area	#	%
General MIS Management	186	44.8
Information Resource Management	31	7.5
Systems Development	49	11.8
Education/Training	46	11.1
Planning	16	3.8
Consulting	35	8.4
Quality Assurance	2	0.5
Database Management	4	1.0
Computer Operations	6	1.4
Telecommunications	4	1.0
Data	1	0.2
Voice and Data	1	0.2
Other	34	8.2
No Response	2	-

Table 10. Membership In Other Organizations

Organization	#	%
DPMA	79	18.4
ACM	113	26.3
ASM	48	11.2
IEEE	22	5.1
TIMS/ORSA	59	13.8
AIIE	9	2.1
Other	99	23.1

AIE, are not very popular with only 5.1% and 2.1% of the respondents respectively.

The respondents appear to be very concerned about keeping abreast of the field. Fully 80.8% (325 of 402 responding) said that they have attended at least one seminar of at least two days in duration during the last two years. Of the 309 that told us about the number of seminars attended, the average number attended over this two year period was 2.61. The number of seminars attended is shown in Table 11.

Employers' Demographics

One hundred and nineteen of the respondents (29.6%) are employed by manufacturers (Table 12). Other industries that appear to be well represented in SMIS are educational institutions (16.4%), banking and financial (12.9%), and consulting (8.2%). While these persons are users of computer services, another 10.2% are providers of services either as a manufacturer of hardware/software or a provider of some other services. It is interesting to note that the organization is controlled by users of computer services rather than vendors as some organizations appear to be.

A number of questions was used to solicit information about the size of the organization and the annual DP budget. The number of responses in this section are reduced because educators were asked to skip this section as most of the questions do not apply to them. It is likely that others, such as consultants, might have skipped this section as well.

Of those that responded, 70.3% provide both data processing and telecommunications to their companies (Table 13). Only three respondents provide telecommunications exclusively. While many responded that they provide services to a functional area or a division, 74.6% provide their services at the corporate level.

Although those corporations vary in size, many are quite large (Table 14). The assets of the organization exceeded \$100 million in over 76.2% of the cases and 26.8% had assets of over \$5 billion. Sales often provide an indicator of an organization's size that is considered to be a better indicator than assets. Of those that responded, 76.5% had sales in excess of \$100

million in fiscal 1980 with 34.6% having sales in excess of \$1 billion dollars. This places this segment in the top 300 of the Fortune 500 ranking in 1980. Certainly SMIS members do not work for cottage industries.

The resources, financial and personal, managed by these information systems professionals are also very large. Excluding the telecommunications budget, the data processing budget is greater than \$1 million in 78.3% of the cases reported (Table 15) and 43.3% of those budgets are greater than \$5 million. It would appear that this question could have had more categories at the higher end of the scale.

Another surprising statistic is that 17.8% spend more than \$5 million on telecommunications. While this budget is smaller for most, the fact that \$5 million is spent on communications seems to show a definite increase in importance of communications.

A review of the number of employees of these organizations shows that 31.2% have staffs which range in size from 101 to 500 employees. Although, only 10.8% have staffs which are larger than 1000 employees, that is an army to manage. Smaller staff sizes (50 or less) were found in 32.0% of the organizations with 9.0% having ten or fewer employees.

SMIS Membership

Most of the respondents to the study are regular members (57.3% as shown in Table 16). As reported in Table 8, 37 respondents listed their principal jobs as educator, educational administrator, or student. However, 65 report that they have academic or student membership status. We might hypothesize that 28 members are in a state of transition and have moved from being a student to industry, or that the financial rewards found in industry have again been used to persuade some academics to leave the university. Are we eating our seed corn?

As can be seen from the number of years that the respondents have been members of SMIS, the majority of respondents have not been members very long. Nearly 58.3% have been members for three years or less.

It is a bit distressing to find that 184, or 44.4%, have never attended a national conference. One

Table 11. Number of Seminars Attended

# of Seminars	#	%
1	58	18.8
2	116	37.5
3	65	21.0
4	38	12.3
5	17	5.5
6	7	2.3
7	2	0.6
8	3	1.0
9	0	0.0
10	2	0.6

Table 12. Major Business

Business	#	%
Manufacturer of Computer Hardware/Software	18	4.5
Provider of Computer Services to Others	23	5.7
Banking and Financial	52	12.9
Educational Institution	66	16.4
Manufacturer	119	29.6
Service Industry	15	3.7
Government	19	4.7
Publishing	5	1.2
Utility	15	3.7
Consulting	33	8.2
Transportation	8	2.0
Other	29	7.2
No Response	15	-

Table 13. Services Provided By This Group

Type of Services:	#	%
Data Processing	93	28.8
Telecommunications	3	0.9
Both Data Processing & Telecommunications	227	70.3
No Response	94	-
Services Are Provided To:		
Corporation	235	74.6
Division	55	17.5
Functional Area	25	7.9
No Response	102	-

Table 14. Sales And Assets of Respondents' Employers

Assets at the end of Fiscal 1980:	#	%
Less than \$10 million	24	8.4
\$10 million to \$50 million	26	9.1
\$50 million to \$100 million	18	6.3
\$100 million to \$1 billion	80	27.8
\$1 billion to \$5 billion	62	21.6
Greater than \$5 billion	77	26.8
No Response	130	-
Annual Sales in Fiscal 1980:		
Less than \$5 million	23	8.0
\$5 million to \$25 million	16	5.6
\$25 million to \$100 million	28	9.8
\$100 million to \$500 million	74	25.9
\$500 million to \$1 billion	46	16.0
Greater than \$1 billion	99	34.6
Not Applicable or No Response	131	-

Table 15. The Data Processing Organization

Budget	DP without Telecomm.		Telecommunications	
	#	%	#	%
Under \$100 thousand	18	5.6	71	23.4
\$100 thousand to \$250 thousand	14	4.3	34	11.2
\$250 thousand to \$500 thousand	11	3.4	40	13.2
\$500 thousand to \$1 million	27	8.4	46	15.2
\$1 million to \$5 million	113	35.0	58	19.1
Greater than \$5 million	140	43.3	54	17.8
No Responses	94	-	114	-
# of Data Processing Employees				
	#	%		
1 - 10	31	9.0		
11 - 50	79	23.0		
51 - 100	65	19.0		
101 - 500	107	31.2		
501 - 1000	24	7.0		
Over 1000	37	10.8		
No Response	74	-		

Table 16. SMIS Membership Characteristics

Type of Membership:		#	%		
Charter		21	5.1		
Regular		235	57.3		
Academic		40	9.8		
Institutional		89	21.7		
Student		25	6.1		
No Response		7	-		
Years of Membership in SMIS:					
0		5	1.2		
1		85	20.5		
2		69	16.6		
3		83	20.0		
4		50	12.0		
5		46	11.1		
6 - 7		17	4.1		
8 - 9		12	2.9		
10 - 11		28	6.7		
Charter		21	5.1		
No Response		7	-		
Number of National SMIS Conferences Attended:					
0		184	44.4		
1		88	21.3		
2		57	13.8		
3		41	9.9		
4		18	4.3		
5		11	2.7		
6 - 7		9	2.2		
8 - 9		4	1.0		
10 - 11		2	0.5		
No Response		3	-		
Have you ever attended a local SMIS Chapter Meeting?					
Yes		162	38.9		
No		254	61.1		
No Response		1	-		
Number of Local Chapter Meetings in 1980?					
		Offered		Attended	
	#	%	#	%	
0	39	22.0	40	22.7	
1 - 2	16	9.0	54	30.7	
3 - 4	24	13.6	41	23.3	
5 - 6	29	16.4	22	12.5	
7 - 8	25	14.1	10	5.7	
9 - 10	38	21.5	8	4.5	
11 - 12	6	3.4	1	0.6	
No Response	240	-	241	-	

would hope that these people are fairly new to the organization and that they will participate in the near future. Most respondents who have attended at least one national conference (79.8%) have attended three or less (186 of the 233 that have attended at least one). Also, a few appear to be diehards that attend every national meeting!

The fact that SMIS does not have a well established local chapter structure was evident in this study as 61.1% reported never having attended a local meeting. In addition, 22.0% reported that no local meetings were offered in their locale in 1980. However, 35.8% of those who attended local meetings, attended from 3 to 6 meetings in 1980. As local chapters begin to become more popular, these percentages should increase substantially.

Concerns of members

Needs and Issues of Members and the Role of SMIS

Perhaps the most important part of this study involves the analysis of the first page of the questionnaire. On this page the respondents were asked to rank eighteen needs and issues and their importance to themselves and the role that SMIS should play in satisfying that need. In both cases, they were given a six point Likert scale to use. On the first half a response of "1" was used to imply that the issue was "Not Important" to them while a "6" was "Very Important" to them. The second half of the page used a "1" to designate that the role that SMIS should play is "Not an Important Role" and a "6" implied that SMIS should play a "Very Important Role."

The thirty-six questions were tallied and a mean and standard deviation calculated for each. The highest means indicate the most interest in those particular needs or issues. Small standard deviations indicate that the responses clustered around those means. Tables 17 and 18 show the rank ordered results of these questions.

Of most importance to the respondents was the issue of long range planning. It was perceived to be the most important issue for the individual respondents and it was also the item that they rated as the most important issue for SMIS to

address. In both situations the mean response was the same (5.13) and both had the lowest standard deviations of that particular question (issues = 1.08, roles = 1.01) which indicates general agreement among the respondents.

There are many reasons why long range planning might rate so high. First, we could hypothesize that no one does it well and everyone is looking for a better approach. Further, we could suggest that the professionalism that SMIS exudes makes it a natural to take the lead in MIS planning. A second theory might be that the questionnaire arrived (November) when planning for the next year was being done. A final theory might be that it ranked highest because it was the first item on the list. However, we will assume that our respondents were more discerning than that theory would suggest.

The second item on each list was "Gauging MIS Effectiveness." Its mean was 5.01 on the issues question and 5.07 on the roles question, with standard deviations of 1.09 and 1.16 respectively. Again these means are very high with quite small standard deviations which indicate a general consensus. Although this was the eighteenth issue and role listed, it is not surprising that it ranked number two in importance. Clearly, it impacts on planning topics as "if you can't measure it, you can't plan it." Measuring the impact of MIS on profit or management performance historically has not always been successful.

Items three and four were reversed in importance on the two lists. The mean for the "Impact of Communications on MIS" on the issues question was 4.67 and "The Developing Role of the Information Resource Manager" had a mean of 4.59, while they had means of 4.53 and 4.82 on the roles question. An explanation of this difference might be a perception that although communications is very important today, it is a technical issue and SMIS should be more involved in management issues. The significance of the information resource manager appears to be growing quite rapidly.

Decision support systems also had relatively high means (issues = 4.43, roles = 4.48). This use of information systems is also growing rapidly as evidenced by the attendance at a conference on DSS held in Atlanta in May 1981, and the number

Table 17. Importance of the Issue to the Respondents

Issue	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. MIS Long Range Planning and Integration	5.13	1.08
2. Gauging MIS Effectiveness	5.01	1.09
3. Impact of Communications on MIS	4.67	1.11
4. The Developing Role of the Information Resource Manager	4.59	1.28
5. Decision Support Systems	4.43	1.31
6. Office of the Future Management	4.39	1.35
7. Employee Training and Career Path Development	4.35	1.31
8. Education of Non-MIS Management	4.35	1.39
9. Centralization vs. Decentralization of MIS Functions	4.29	1.34
10. Employee Job Satisfaction	4.29	1.35
11. Providing End Users with Their Own Development Systems	4.08	1.42
12. Problems of Maintaining Data Security	3.95	1.32
13. Impact of Software Engineering on MIS	3.87	1.38
14. Problems of Maintaining Information Privacy	3.80	1.36
15. Management Science and the MIS Environment	3.77	1.37
16. Professional Recruitment	3.72	1.56
17. MIS Ethics	3.57	1.49
18. Impact of Personal Computers on an Institutional Environment	3.10	1.49

of DSS sessions appearing at computer conferences. It is apparent that SMIS should also be increasing its role in this area.

Office of the future management is the last item of significant importance that carried approximately equal weight on the issues (mean = 4.39) and roles (mean = 4.42) question. It would appear that this issue is also growing very rapidly.

Three other comments should be made about these two questions. First, "MIS Ethics" rated seventeenth on the issues question but rated eighth on the roles question. Therefore, one would hypothesize that while the respondents did not think that it was important to them, they did believe that SMIS should play an important role. However, as shown later in Table 19 the Ethics Roundtable was the least important activity of SMIS. We have no explanation for this inconsistency.

The last item on each list was "Impact of Personal Computers on an Institutional Environment." Not only was it last but it was last by a wide margin. The authors used this question because they felt

that personal computers will have an increasing role in MIS over the next several years. However, the wording is poor and should more likely be something on the order of "Impact of Personal Computers on MIS." It is not believed that the responses received on this item are representative of the importance of personal computers to management.

A third comment should be made about "Employee Job Satisfaction." Tenth on the issues list (mean = 4.29), this item only ranked sixteenth on the roles list (mean = 3.70). It would appear that while it is an important issue for the respondents, they do not perceive that SMIS needs to play an important role in solving the problem. This is not a technical or a management concern but more a behavioralist's problem. Apparently SMIS should pay less attention to behavioral problems if this data is to be believed.

SMIS Activities

The survey also investigated the importance of SMIS activities. Four activities were identified and

the respondents were again asked to rate the importance of the activities to them on a six point Likert scale with one being not important and six being very important. Table 19 summarizes the results of this question.

Of most importance is the annual national conference with a mean of 4.54. The continued growth in attendance at this conference would serve to reinforce this finding.

A second item, regional workshops on important MIS issues, rated very close to the annual national conference (mean = 4.42). However, actual experience with these workshops has been disappointing. A conference in Chicago was cancelled in the Fall of 1980 and a similar workshop in Seattle had four of five sessions cancelled. Perhaps the desire is there but the topics have not been important enough.

Local chapters are beginning to appear around the country with chapters in such cities as Chicago, Minneapolis, Boston, New York, and Los Angeles. The fact that the mean was only

4.09 might be a result of the lack of importance attached to this by the 61.1% (Table 16) that have never attended a local chapter meeting. We would expect that this will change as more local chapters are chartered.

Finally, as mentioned earlier, the Ethics Roundtable was not seen as being an important activity. We would hope that readers will not interpret this result to mean that SMIS is unethical!

Publications

The importance of SMIS publications was also included in the survey. Scoring very high was *MIS Quarterly* with a mean of 4.91. (Table 20), with the score of the *Monthly Members Forum* being much lower (mean = 3.91). *MIS Quarterly* has a number of articles of importance to practitioners that appear to be of value to them, while the *Monthly Members Forum* must be perceived as a newsletter of lesser importance. Each has a different goal and the authors do not believe that this

Table 18. Role that SMIS Should Play

Issue	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. MIS Long Range Planning and Integration	5.13	1.01
2. Gauging MIS Effectiveness	5.07	1.16
3. The Developing Role of the Information Resource Manager	4.82	1.20
4. Impact of Communications on MIS	4.53	1.25
5. Decision Support Systems	4.48	1.29
6. Office of the Future Management	4.42	1.32
7. Centralization vs. Decentralization of MIS Functions	4.31	1.37
8. MIS Ethics	4.04	1.56
9. Education of Non-MIS Management	4.02	1.55
10. Employee Training and Career Path Development	3.95	1.46
11. Problems of Maintaining Information Privacy	3.92	1.34
12. Management Sciences and the MIS Environment	3.90	1.45
13. Problems of Maintaining Data Security	3.87	1.38
14. Impact of Software Engineering on MIS	3.80	1.48
15. Providing End Users with Their Own Development Systems	3.77	1.55
16. Employee Job Satisfaction	3.70	1.54
17. Professional Recruitment	3.25	1.53
18. Impact of Personal Computers on an Institutional Environment	2.97	1.45

Table 19. Importance of SMIS Activities

Activity	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. Annual National Conference	4.54	1.23
2. Regional Workshops on Important MIS Issues	4.42	1.14
3. A Local Chapter	4.09	1.62
4. Ethics Roundtable	2.72	1.38

Table 20. Importance of Publications

Publication	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. <i>MIS Quarterly</i>	4.91	1.05
2. Monthly Members Forum	3.91	1.26

question has any reflection on whether that goal is being met.

Special Interest Groups

Many professional organizations, ACM in particular, sponsor special interest groups on subjects which are of interest to their members. Seven topics were listed to solicit whether special interest groups might be important to the respondents. The same Likert scale was used as was used in all other questions from this section. Table 21 shows the results of this question.

As might be expected, planning is the most important topic for a special interest group with a mean of 4.78. The rest were significantly lower with "Research in MIS" (mean = 4.06) and "End User Software" (mean = 4.04) having very similar ratings. "Smaller Organizations" scored very poorly as might be expected as Table 14 shows that the respondents are predominately from larger organizations.

The implication of the response to this question is that SMIS might initiate a special interest group in planning. We would predict that membership would be very high.

Summary

The survey reported in this article represents the first attempt to study the characteristics of the membership of SMIS, what needs and issues they face, and the direction that SMIS should follow in the future. The data collected is rich in information content and we are just now beginning to fully analyze it. In addition to the numerical data presented here, over 300 written comments appeared on the survey forms which are, of course, more difficult to analyze but potentially of more value to determining the direction of SMIS.

Future work with this data will be concentrated on analyzing the needs and issues of members categorized according to various demographics. For instance, it might be interesting to see if there is a difference in needs and issues when the data is divided by industry group, size of the organization, or class of SMIS membership. Other demographic divisions might also be interesting to review.

This, then, is a preliminary view of this survey. Yet, the information content is important. For example, we have learned that members are part of very large organizations with control over substantial resources. Also, the members are well-educated and spend a considerable amount

Table 21. Sponsorship of Special Interest Groups

Topic	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. Planning	4.78	1.20
2. Research in MIS	4.06	1.54
3. End User Software	4.04	1.44
4. Communication Management	3.77	1.44
5. Education	3.65	1.55
6. Graphics	3.37	1.57
7. Smaller Organizations	2.86	1.46

of time and effort in professional development activities. They are particularly concerned with management issues and have a strong need to do more long range planning and to be able to measure the effectiveness of the organizations that they manage.

In brief, SMIS is an organization for top information systems managers. It would appear that the programs that they provide are satisfying their members. We hope that this study will assist them to continue in that direction.

Appendix

1980 SMIS Membership Survey

I. Needs and Issues of SMIS Membership

The first part of this questionnaire is designed to determine the needs and issues that you believe are important to you and to determine whether you believe that SMIS should address them in some appropriate forum. The needs and issues are described on the left with two columns provided in the center and on the right. In the center, please circle one number from 1 to 6 which best describes how important this item is to you. In the column on the right, please circle one number from 1 to 6 which best describes the role that SMIS should play in meeting your needs.

	IMPORTANCE OF THIS ISSUE TO YOU						ROLE THAT SMIS SHOULD PLAY						COMMENTS OR SUGGESTED ROLE (Attach Additional Comments)
	<i>Not Important</i>			<i>Very Important</i>			<i>Not An Important Role</i>			<i>Very Important Role</i>			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1. MIS Long Range Planning and Integration	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
2. Centralization vs. Decentralization of MIS Functions	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
3. Impact of Communications on MIS	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
4. The Developing Role of the Information Resource Manager	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
5. Education of Non-MIS Management	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____

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6. Providing End Uses With Their Own Developmental Systems	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
7. MIS Ethics	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
8. Impact of Personal Computers in an Institutional Environment	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
9. Office of the Future Management	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
10. Problems of Maintaining Data Security	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
11. Problems of Maintaining Information Privacy	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
12. Professional Recruitment	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
13. Employee Training and Career Path Development	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
14. Employee Job Satisfaction	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
15. Management Sciences and the MIS Environment	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
16. Impact of Software Engineering on MIS	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
17. Decision Support Systems	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
18. Gauging MIS Effectiveness	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
19. Other (describe)	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
<hr/>													
20. Other (describe)	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
<hr/>													

II. SMIS Programs and Activities

This section is intended to determine what programs and activities of SMIS are or would be important to you in your continuing membership.

	IMPORTANCE TO YOU						ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
	<i>Not</i>					<i>Very</i>	
	<i>Important</i>					<i>Important</i>	
A. ACTIVITIES:							
1. A Local Chapter	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
2. Annual National Conference	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
3. Regional Workshops on Important MIS Issues	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
4. Ethics Roundtable	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
5. Other Activities (describe)	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____
B. PUBLICATIONS:							
1. Monthly Members Forum	1	2	3	4	5	6	_____

2. MIS Quarterly 1 2 3 4 5 6 _____
- 3 Other (describe) 1 2 3 4 5 6 _____

C. SPONSORSHIP OF SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP IN:

1. Education 1 2 3 4 5 6 _____
- 2 Research in MIS 1 2 3 4 5 6 _____
3. Smaller Organizations 1 2 3 4 5 6 _____
4. Communication Management 1 2 3 4 5 6 _____
- 5 Planning 1 2 3 4 5 6 _____
6. End User Software 1 2 3 4 5 6 _____
- 7 Graphics 1 2 3 4 5 6 _____
8. Other (describe) 1 2 3 4 5 6 _____

D. YOUR COMMENTS ON THE ROLE OF THE SOCIETY IN THE 80'S
(Attach additional sheets if desired)

III. Background Information

This section is to gather the information about your background for statistical purposes only, so that your answers may be compared to others like yourself.

1. How long have you been a member of SMIS? _____ (years)

2. Type of current membership? (circle one)

Charter 1 Faculty 3 Student 5
Regular 2 Institutional 4

3 How many SMIS Annual National Conferences have you attended? _____ (number)

4. Have you ever attended a local chapter meeting of SMIS? Yes___ No___
If yes, approximately how many meetings were offered locally in 1980? _____
And how many did you attend during 1980? _____

5. In which of the following categories would you place your current position?
(circle one)

Top Management — general management responsible for two or more functional areas	1	Senior Staff Professional or Technical Member	5
Upper Middle Management — top management in a functional area	2	Junior Staff Professional or Technical Member	6
Middle Management	3	Educator	7
First Line Management	4	Educational Administrator — educator with some administrative responsibility	8
		Student	9

6. What is your primary functional area of responsibility? (circle one)

General MIS Management	1	Quality Assurance	7
Information Resource Management	2	Data Base Management	8
Systems Development	3	Computer Operations	9
Education/Training	4	Tele-communications	10
Planning	5	Data	11
Consulting	6	Voice and Data	12
		Other (please describe)	13

7. How many years have you worked in your present position? _____ (years)

SMIS Membership Analysis

Note: The following questions relate to your organization. Please circle the description that best describes your organization and answer these questions for that organization. (Educators, please skip to question #15)

8. This group supplies most all: (circle one) To the: (circle one)
- | | | | |
|--|---|-----------------|---|
| Data Processing | 1 | Corporation | 1 |
| Tele-Communications | 2 | Division | 2 |
| Both Data Processing & Tele-Communications | 3 | Functional Area | 3 |

9. Number of employees in group defined above? (circle one)

1 - 10	1	51 - 100	3	501 - 1000	5
11 - 50	2	101 - 500	4	Over 1000	6

10. Annual DP Budget *excluding* Tele-Communications? (circle one)

Under \$100,000	1	\$ 500,001 - \$1,000,000	4
\$100,001 - \$250,000	2	\$1,000,001 - \$5,000,000	5
\$250,001 - \$500,000	3	Over \$5,000,000	6

11. Annual Tele-Communications Budget? (circle one)

Under \$100,000	1	\$ 500,001 - \$1,000,000	4
\$100,001 - \$250,000	2	\$1,000,001 - \$5,000,000	5
\$250,001 - \$500,000	3	Over \$5,000,000	6

12. The annual sales of your organization in Fiscal 1980 were: (circle one)

less than \$ 5M	1	\$100M to \$500M	4
\$5M to \$ 25M	2	\$500M to \$ 1B	5
\$25M to \$100M	3	greater than \$1B	6
		Not Applicable	7

13. The assets of your organization at the end of Fiscal 1980 were:

less than \$ 10M	1	\$100M to \$ 1B	4
\$10M to \$ 50M	2	\$ 1B to \$ 5B	5
\$50M to \$100M	3	greater than \$5B	6

14. Circle the one number that best describes your organizations' use of each of the following hardware or software.

	<i>Have In Place</i>	<i>Are Now Implementing</i>	<i>Currently Under Active Evaluation</i>	<i>Do not Have and Have Not Evaluated It</i>	<i>Do Not Have Because It Has Been Rejected</i>	<i>Other</i>
a. Word Processing	1	2	3	4	5	_____
b. Electronic Mail	1	2	3	4	5	_____
c. Data Base Manage- ment Systems	1	2	3	4	5	_____
d. Distributive Processing	1	2	3	4	5	_____
e. Graphics	1	2	3	4	5	_____
f. Interactive Ter- minals for User	1	2	3	4	5	_____
g. Non-Procedural Languages	1	2	3	4	5	_____

15. The major business of your organization is (circle the item that best applies):

- | | | | |
|--|---|------------------------|----|
| Manufacturer of computer hardware/software | 1 | Government | 7 |
| Provider of computer services to others | 2 | Publishing | 8 |
| Banking and Financial | 3 | Utility | 9 |
| Educational Institution | 4 | Consulting | 10 |
| Manufacturer | 5 | Transportation | 11 |
| Service Industry | 6 | Other (please specify) | 12 |
-

Note: The following questions refer to you.

16. What state do you live in? ____ ____ (enter 2-letter abbreviation)

17. What is your sex? ____ (enter M or F)

18. Which of the following categories include your age? (circle one)

- | | | | | | |
|----------|---|----------|---|----------|---|
| Under 25 | 1 | 30 to 39 | 3 | 50 to 59 | 5 |
| 25 to 29 | 2 | 40 to 49 | 4 | Over 59 | 6 |

19. What is the highest level of education that you have achieved? (circle one)

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---------------------------|---|
| Did not complete High School | 1 | Completed Masters Degree | 4 |
| Completed High School | 2 | Completed Doctoral Degree | 5 |
| Completed 4-year College | 3 | | |

20. What description *best* describes the major of the highest college degree completed? (circle one)

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|------------------------|---|
| Management Information Systems | 1 | Education | 5 |
| Business/Accounting | 2 | Liberal Arts | 6 |
| Computer Science | 3 | Other (please specify) | 7 |
| Engineering | 4 | | |
-
- Have not completed a College Degree 8

21. Which of the following categories best describes your annual salary in your current position? (circle one)

- | | | | |
|----------------------|---|----------------------|---|
| Under \$20,000 | 1 | \$40,000 to \$49,999 | 4 |
| \$20,000 to \$29,999 | 2 | \$50,000 to \$79,999 | 5 |
| \$30,000 to \$39,999 | 3 | \$80,000 or Over | 6 |

22. Which of the following professional groups do you belong to? (circle all that apply)

- | | | | | | |
|------|---|------|---|-----------|---|
| DPMA | 1 | ASM | 3 | TIMS/ORSA | 5 |
| ACM | 2 | IEEE | 4 | AIIE | 6 |
- OTHER (please specify)
-

23. Over the last two years have you attended any professional improvement seminars of at least two-days in length? (circle one)

- Yes
- No If you answered yes, how many seminars? _____ (number)

24. How many years has your principal job been in some information systems function? _____ (years)

About the Authors

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