UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FACULTY OF COMMERCE
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

MAIN EXAMINATION – MAY 2011

COURSE TITLE	: MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS
COURSE CODE	: BA 311– FULLTIME and IDE
CLASS	: DIPLOMA IN COMMERCE
TIME ALLOWED	: THREE (3) HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. THIS PAPER CONSISTS OF SECTIONS (A) AND (B)

2. SECTION (A) IS COMPULSORY.

    TOTAL MARKS **40**

3. ANSWER ANY THREE (3) QUESTIONS FROM SECTION B.

    TOTAL MARKS **60**

4. THE TOTAL NUMBER OF QUESTIONS IN THIS PAPER IS FIVE (5)

NOTE; GOOD COMMUNICATION IN ENGLISH AND ORDERLY PRESENTATION
AFFECTS THE TOTAL MARKS YOU WILL BE ALLOCATED FOR EACH ATTEMPTED
QUESTION

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SECTION A. - COMPULSORY

WEB 2.0 TOOLS

Who's blogging? It's not just twenty-somethings who want to chronicle their experiences, vent about consumer products, or put out a political message. Today's blogger might very well be an employee at Intel, IBM, or any number of companies that have embraced Web 2.0 tools. Blogs, wikis, and social networking are emerging as powerful tools to boost communication and productivity in the corporate workforce. McKinsey & Co. reported that approximately one-third of the top executives it polled have Web 2.0 tools in use or plan to deploy them.

Web 2.0 tools have made inroads into the business world because the software that supports them is generally inexpensive and user friendly. A manager who wants to communicate with his or her team via a blog or have the progress documented on a wiki can institute the technology without help from the I.T. department and without superiors worrying about high costs.

At Sun Microsystems, management compelled its engineers to create wiki pages that described their projects. Once the engineers were comfortable with the technology, it was easier for them to transition to using wikis for the company's formal software documentation. The use of wikis also spread to meeting notes, project plans, and software reports, resulting in a total four-fold increase in the amount of documented information at Sun.

Web 2.0 tools are particularly valuable at IBM, where 42 percent of the workforce operates remotely, either from home or client offices. Brian Goodman, who is the Connecticut-based manager of a software development team with members in New York and Massachusetts, says that the wikis give him "a single view of projects and their status without pinging each" worker every day with an instant message.

The use of social networking in business is so far limited mostly to recruiting and making sales contacts. Recruiters at Microsoft and Starbucks have used Linkedia® to search for potential job candidates. At IBM however, employees engage in social internetworking internally through its corporate directory - BluePages®, which is edited by employees and serves as a sort of internal corporate MySpace®. The directory contains basic information on 400,000 employees and is accessed, on average, six million times daily. Employees have control of most of the content on their individual entries, and can post their own photos and resumes (curriculum vitae) to their corporate "profiles".

Two of the biggest challenges for companies using Web 2.0 technologies are convincing workers to embrace these tools, and regulating their use. IBM reminds employees to remember the rules of privacy, respect, and confidentiality in its corporate code of conduct and does not allow any anonymous online communication.

Case adapted from Laudon and Laudon, Management Information Systems, 8ᵗʰ Edition.

1. Based on your overall understanding of information systems, discuss, **under headings**, 3 key benefits that Web 2.0 tools provide to organizations, using the above case to support your points.   (15 marks)

2. How can management of companies using Web 2.0 tools ensure security of information on networks? Discuss, **under headings**, 5 specific control mechanisms that organizations can provide. For each mechanism, clearly explain how it would make the information more secure.   (25 marks)

SECTION B. – ANSWER ANY 3 QUESTIONS

Question 2

Barney Boy is a systems analyst and has been hired by your organization to create an information system. During his informal meetings with the staff, he learns the following about the work flows in the organization.

- That the Marketing Department normally undertakes research on the existing products to find out if these products are still relevant to the market. This it will do by taking into account the sales made to existing and new customers.
- That the Financial Controller is also responsible for the payment of salaries to the workers.
- That the Financial Controller, in paying out her office expenditure, enters the information in a template that will be used for the year's annual financial statements.
- That the Warehouse Manager will from time to time send information to the suppliers to tell them what raw materials are needed. He will also have to input this information on the new orders in a new file which he calls "New Orders".
- That the company has no procedures for doing anything. Employees simply do what seems appropriate to them.
- That the Management Accountant, when preparing his annual budget, must allocate the rental cost according to the area (in square metres) occupied by each department. This information is available from the Administration department in a file called "Floor Area Allocation".
- The Marketing Officer sends out weekly promotion materials to all customers.
- The HR Manager is responsible for determining the workers shifts, regardless of whether the employee is a production worker or clerical worker.
- The Finance Department prepares an annual budget, which all departments must adhere to when *making all decisions that will require money.*

Because of his busy schedule, Barney Boy has asked you, after being told that you have covered MIS as a course for your diploma, to create a Data-Class /Process Matrix for him.

(20 marks)

Question 3

Warren McFarlan suggests 4 intervention strategies that can help to minimize project risks. Explain these four strategies, giving a situation as an example for each strategy.

(20 marks)

Question 4

The Royal Swaziland Police (RSP) are interested in automating some of their operations. Specifically, they want to automate their traffic ticketing and their database administration. As such they have asked you to come up with an information systems plan that they can use to convince the Commissioner and his executive why it is vital to automate these activities. Draw up this plan and briefly explain what each section is to cover, with specific reference / examples to the RSP situation (Note: state your assumptions especially on the current system in use). (20 marks)

Question 5

A. Explain two key challenges an organization may face in the implementation stage of the Systems Development Life Cycle. (10 marks)

B. Explain two key challenges an organization may face in the detailed design stage of the Systems Development Life Cycle. (10 marks)