

Glossary of terms

Analytical processing: Involves analysis of accumulated data, frequently by end-users in an organisation. Analytical processing activities include data mining, decision support and querying.

Business Intelligence: Business Intelligent systems combine data gathering, data storage and knowledge management with analytical tools to present complex internal and competitive information to planners and decision-makers.

Communications-driven DSS: Systems built using communication, collaboration and decision support technologies.

Corporate portal: World Wide Web site that provides the gateway to corporate information from a single point of access.

Critical Success Factors (CSFs): Those key areas of activity in which favourable results are *absolutely necessary* for a particular manager to reach his or her goals.

Data cube: In a multidimensional database, data can be viewed and analysed from different views or perspectives, known as business decisions. These dimensions form a cube.

Data-driven DSS: These systems analyse large “pools of data” found in major organisational systems and they support decision-making by allowing users to extract useful information that was previously buried in large quantities of data.

Data warehouse: A repository of subject-oriented historical data that is organised to be accessible in a form readily acceptable for analytical processing activities.

Decision-making: A three-stage process involving intelligence, design and choice.

Decision Support System: An interactive, flexible, and adaptable computer-based information system, specially developed for supporting the solution of a non-structured management problem for improved decision-making.

Document-driven DSS: These systems integrate a variety of storage and processing technologies to provide complete document retrieval and analysis.

Enterprise portal: Secure Web locations that can be customised or personalised that allow staff and business partners to, and interaction with, a range of internal and external applications and information sources.

Executives: Corporate knowledge workers responsible for corporate strategic management activities.

Executive Information System: A computerised system that provides executives with easy access to internal and external information that is relevant to their critical success factors.

Expert System: An IS which provides the stored knowledge of experts to non experts.

Extranet: A secured network that connects several Intranets via the Internet; allows two or more organisations to communicate and collaborate in a controlled fashion.

Information System (IS): A combination of technology, people and process to capture, transmit, store, retrieve, manipulate and display information.

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Knowledge-driven DSS: These systems contain specialised problem-solving expertise wherein the “expertise” consists of knowledge about a particular domain.

Management Science: An approach that takes the view the managers can follow a fairly systematic process for solving problems.

Model-driven DSS: Model-driven DSS emphasise access to and manipulation of a model.

Pooled interdependent decision-making: A joint, collaborative decision-making process whereby all managers work together on a task.

Portal: Access to and interaction with relevant information assets (information/content, applications and business processes), knowledge assets and human assets, by select target audiences, delivered in a highly personalised manner.

Semi-structured problem: Only some of the intelligence, design and choice phases are structured and requiring a combination of standard solution procedures and individual judgement.

Structured problem: The intelligence, design and choice phases are all structured and the procedures for obtaining the best solution are known.

Unstructured problem: None of the intelligence, design and choice phases is structured and human intuition is frequently the basis for decision-making.

Web-based technology: A technology that did not exist prior to the World Wide Web (“the Web”) and utilises core Internet and Web technologies as the platform on which the solution operates.

Wireless Application Protocol (WAP): A set of communication protocols designed to enable different kinds of wireless devices to talk to a server installed on a mobile network so users can access the Internet.

World Wide Web (“the Web”): An information space consisting of hyperlinked documents published on the Internet.