IT Fundamentals

Tutorial 2
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1. Running Case Study 1: Dirt Bikes - Understanding Information System Requirements - Questions and Discussion

2. Review Questions
1. What are the company’s goals and culture?

Dirt Bikes appears to have a very democratic, employee-friendly culture, emphasizing ongoing learning, quality, attention to detail, and employee contributions.
2. What products and services does Dirt Bikes U.S.A. provide? How many types of products and services are available to customers? How does Dirt Bikes sell its products?

- Dirt Bikes specializes in off-road and motocross motorcycles that emphasize racing performance, styling, and best quality parts sourced from all over the world.
- It is a small company producing only 4 models.
- Dirt Bikes sells through a network of authorized dealers. Its sales department is responsible for working with these distributors and finding ways to promote Dirt Bikes.
3. How many employees are managers, production workers, or knowledge or information workers? Are there levels of management?

- The company is very small and not very hierarchical. Most of the employees are in production. Many of its departments have less than 10 people. Production is probably the only department that warrants more than 1 manager.
- One might expect to see separate managers for Service, Shipping & Receiving, Parts, and Design and Engineering and perhaps several additional managers for Manufacturing.
4. What kinds of information systems and technologies would be the most important for a company such as Dirt Bikes?

One would expect to see information systems supporting manufacturing and production and sales and marketing being the most important for this company. Such systems would help the company monitor work on the assembly line, obtain parts from suppliers, monitor orders from distributors, and provide parts and servicing information. A company Web site to publicize the unique features of this brand and its connection to motorcycle racing events would also be very valuable.
2. Review Questions

1. Describe how the information systems function supports a business.

The information systems department is the formal organizational unit responsible for information technology services. The information systems department is responsible for maintaining the hardware, software, data storage, and networks that comprise the firm’s IT infrastructure.
2. Describe the relationship between information systems and business processes.

Information systems automate manual business processes and make an organization more efficient. Data and information are available to a wider range of decision-makers more quickly when information systems are used to change the flow of information. Tasks can be performed simultaneously rather than sequentially, speeding up the completion of business processes. Information systems can also drive new business models that perhaps wouldn’t be possible without the technology.
3. Explain how intranets and extranets help firms integrate information and business processes.

Because intranets and extranets share the same technology and software platforms as the Internet, they are easy and inexpensive ways for companies to increase integration and expedite the flow of information within the company (intranets alone) and with customers and suppliers (extranets). They provide ways to distribute information and store corporate policies, programs, and data. Both types of nets can be customized by users and provide a single point of access to information from several different systems. Businesses can connect the nets to transaction processing systems easily and quickly. Interfaces between the nets and TPS, MIS, DSS, and ESS systems provide input and output for users.