

Preparation Sheet for MI 703 Computer Information Systems
Session #10 March 28th 2007: Adoption, Diffusion & Implementation of Emerging IT

- **Guest Speaker:** Jackie Fenn, Gartner Research

Session Overview

In Session #7 we considered tools for developing custom systems that are unique to a particular organization. However, most of the technologies in organizations are commercial products developed by IT vendors and then diffused across the industry. Because these technologies get adopted by numerous organizations rather than just one, they present a different set of challenges and opportunities. The development has already been done: now the question is should an organization adopt the technology? Will it be widely adopted by others? Does it matter if it is? And if adopted, how should that technology be implemented? The goal for this session is to understand how these questions can be addressed systematically.

The two Lecture Notes assigned for today provide a survey of adoption/diffusion issues and implementation issues. Modern business are increasingly IT-driven, an understanding how to adopt and implement emerging IT is critical issue for most organizations. It is also of special interest, of course, to vendors that develop and market new IT, and the consultants and analysts that cover industries that supply IT—or are being transformed by IT.

The first part of this session will feature guest speaker Jackie Fenn, a VP and fellow at Gartner Research and originator of the “Hype Cycle” concept. She will be talking about the Hype Cycle and other topics related to IT adoption.

Following the guest spot I will present a lecture/discussion to reinforce concepts related to adoption, diffusion and implementation covered in the Lecture Notes.

Required Readings and Study Questions

1. Lecture Note: Adoption and Diffusion of Emerging IT, Fichman (Coursepack)

- We will be using is the Microsoft TabletPC as tangible example to refer to when discussing some of this material.
 - Please familiarize yourself with this technology by going to this site:
<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/tabletpc/evaluation/tours/default.mspx>
 - If you click on the “Tablet PC Overview Demo” button you will be offered a three part demo: “Redefining Mobility”, “Powerful Applications” and “Versatile Computing”. Going through each part takes only a few minutes.
- Why is it important for managers to have a grasp of the forces affecting IT adoption and diffusion?
- Why do “good” technologies so often fail? Can you think of any recent examples where this has happened? What were the implications for companies that had adopted those technologies?
- What can managers do to be better prepared to recognize (and where appropriate, resist) bandwagon pressures surrounding fashionable IT innovations? What are the implications of the Hype Cycle for timing and managing IT adoption?
- What kinds of firms should take the lead in adopting and assimilating emerging IT innovations? Why?

2. Lecture Note: IT Implementation and Assimilation, Fichman (Coursepack)

- How is “implementation” different from “assimilation”?
- Consider the main barriers to successful IT implementation. Have you ever been in an organization that had a problematic implementation? If so, which if, any of these barriers were factors?
- The Lecture Note suggests many tactics for promoting technology implementation and assimilation. What role, if any, does line management play in promoting these tactics?