Implementing Communications-Driven and Group Decision Support Systems

Collaborating with peers at other locations is needed in many companies.

Communications Support Technologies

- Audio Conferencing
- Bulletin Boards
- Web Conferencing
- Document Sharing
- Electronic Mail
- GDSS and computer-supported face-to-face meetings
- Interactive Video

Categories of Group Support

- Same Time/Same Place
  - Decision Rooms, Computers with projector displays, Voting Tools
- Different Time/Same Place
  - Workstation Software for shift work, Document Sharing
- Same Time/Different Place
  - 2-Way video, Audio Conferencing, White Boards, Screen Sharing, Chat
- Different Time/Different Place
  - Conferencing, Bulletin Boards, E-Mail, Voice Mail

Communications-driven DSS architectures

- Decision Room
- Local Network Decision Support
- Video Conferencing Decision Support
- Web-based Decision Support

Group Decision Room

at Lappeenranta University of Technology, Dept. of Industrial Engineering and Management, Finland
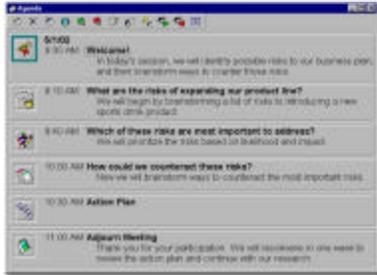

Group Decision Support Tools

- Agenda Tools
- Whiteboards
- Opinion Meter
- Idea Categorizer
- Electronic Brainstorming
- Topic Commenter
- Voting Tools
- Survey Tools
- Alternative analysis tools
- Group Outliner

www.GroupSystems.COM

Check the tour
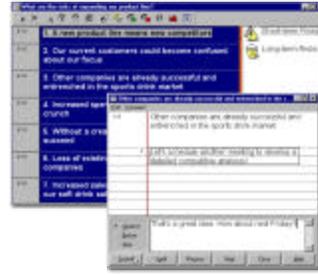
Analyze Results
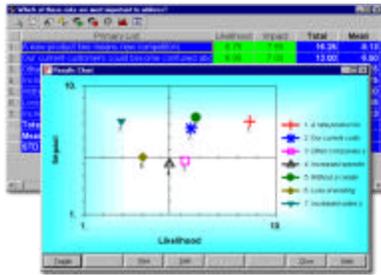
Meetingworks.com

❚ Meetingworks for Windows GDSS on LAN
❚ Meetingworks Connect
❚ Meetingworks InternetEdition

Meetingworks Cross Impact Tool Summary

Choosing Group Support Software and Technologies

❚ There are 3 dimensions that are crucial for designing or choosing the Group Support Software
  ❚ Task Type
    ❙ What is the group task?
  ❚ Group Size
    ❙ How many are in the group?
  ❚ Group Proximity
    ❙ Where are the group members located?

Group DSS Benefits

- Simultaneous input leverages your team's time and creates higher quality ideas
- The computer system records ideas for distribution and future work
- Process support facilities completing team tasks faster
- GDSS provides access to information that lets the group use outside data while working in the system
- Meeting can be held anywhere (even globally)
- Alternatives can be discussed with remote members through videoconferencing

Task Types and Media Types

- Generating ideas and actions →decision support
- Choosing among alternatives → decision support
- Negotiating Solutions → face-to-face

Virtual Organizations

- A company that operates continuously through traditional barriers of time and distance
  - By the year 2008 the typical large business will have half the levels of management and one third the managers of its counterpart today -- Drucker

Virtual Organizations Benefits

- Increased effectiveness
- Reduced costs
- Improved client satisfaction
- Reduced capital Investment needs in new businesses
- Greatly reduced expenses
- Shortened lead times
- Better inventory management
- A direct connection with the customer

New Organizational Structures

- Community Structure
  - Large number of interdependent organizations can be grouped into a multi-level hierarchy
- Federation Structure
  - Centralized computing resources can help small business owners and professionals coordinate their businesses – Application Service Providers

Organizational Structures

- Mobile Structure
  - Information oriented structure that is mobile both in the sense of being transportable or moveable and responsive and changeable
- Skyscraper Structure
  - Managers at the "top" would supervise very few people and the number of management levels in the organization would be very large; Managers process transactions and use DSS

Evaluating Communications-Driven DSS Products

- Reliability
- Cost
- Scalability
- Security
- Development Features
- Ease of Installation and Use

Review Questions

- What are the four categories of Group support?
- What is a Virtual Organization?
- Why do managers need the support provided by GDSS?
- How can Communications-Driven DSS alter organizational structures and relationships?
- When would you use various group support tools?