IMS1603 Lecture 2

Getting Started

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Today’s Lecture

• Unit objectives
• A look at the tute/lab exercises
• What is a retrieval-based information system? Some initial thoughts

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Paper versus digital document

• Is equipment required to use it?
• Is it remotely accessible?
• Is simultaneous use possible?
• Is its usage measurable?
• Can its content/form be revised? (Buckland 1991: 74)

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Unit objectives

- At the completion of this unit the students will:
  - have knowledge of:
  - have an understanding of:
  - have the skills to:
  - have developed attitudes which enable them to:

have knowledge of:

- basic ICTs and IM tools developed to manage information and meet user needs
- the information-seeking behaviour of users
- the range of information sources
- human computer interfaces to information
- the forms that information can take

Let's talk about Google.
have an understanding of:

- the fundamental concepts of information, and its use by individuals, organisations and societies
- information creation, representation, storage, access, retrieval, and use
- the impact of organisational and social contexts upon information needs and uses

What does Voyager mean to you?

have the skills to:

- evaluate information and its sources critically
- identify particular information needs
- evaluate ICTs and IM tools in terms of meeting user needs
- use basic ICT and IM tools to create, represent, store, access, retrieve and use information
have the skills to:

- identify particular information needs

‘When does the shuttle bus go to Clayton?’

have developed attitudes which enable them to:

- be aware of the role and responsibilities of information professionals

- be aware of the role of ICTs and IM in human activity

Victoria Police issued a statement confirming it was working closely with the Ombudsman and the privacy commissioner to investigate allegations of inappropriate use of police files.

*The Age, 9 December 2003*
The saga continues ...

Australia’s top anti-corruption investigator, Tony Fitzgerald, QC, is expected to release soon his report on how a top-secret Victoria Police report containing sensitive information on a police informer was leaked to criminals.

‘A source has told The Sunday Age the report, expected to be released in the next two to four weeks, is unlikely to identify a “smoking gun”, but will highlight systemic intelligence management problems within the Victoria Police.

‘It is also almost certain to recommend sweeping changes to the cataloguing and distribution of police intelligence reports.’

The Age, 20 February 2005

Tute/lab exercises

- Working in pairs in laboratories (‘labs’)
- Working in groups of 3-4 in tutorials (‘tutes’)
- After finishing an exercise, discuss your findings with the whole class

Exercises for Lab 1

- Looking at 3 websites, and how they organise their information

Let’s look at one now.
Exercises for Tute 1

• Looking at 2 retrieval-based information systems
  – One is paper
  – The other is digital

Exercises for Tute 1

• This index is both a document and an information system:
  – How is its information structured? – i.e. arranged in particular ways
  – What is its purpose?
  – Is it a hybrid document/system?
  – Is it targeted at a particular audience? How can you tell?
Exercises for Tute 1

- Let’s look at a digital document:
  
  http://mutts.monash.edu.au/MUTTS

Exercises for Tute 1

- This website is both a document and an information system:
  - What inputs does it require?
  - What information does it need (i.e. the database ‘fields’) to achieve its objectives?
  - What are the desired ‘outputs’ or results for users of the system?
  - What are its failings or weaknesses?
  - How would this information be provided before the advent of computer networks?

Exercises for Tute 1

- This website is both a document and an information system:
  - How is its information structured? – i.e. arranged in particular ways
  - What is its purpose?
  - Is it a hybrid document/system?
  - Is it targeted at a particular audience? How can you tell?
  - you’ll address other questions in the tutorial
**What is a retrieval-based information system?**

- Like document, this is a term that can be used in different ways.
- Michael Buckland (1991: 30) suggests that a range of things fall under the label of information system.
- In IM, it is common to focus upon retrieval-based information systems, but these aren’t the only kind.

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**What is a retrieval-based information system?**

- For Buckland (1991: 104) retrieving information entails:
  - ‘Identifying’
  - ‘Locating’
  - ‘Physically retrieving’

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**What is a retrieval-based information system?**

- Buckland (1991: 35) has a very broad definition in mind:
  
  ‘a system is an information system if it is used as an information system, especially if it has been designed to be used as an information system’
What is a retrieval-based information system?

- Buckland (1991: 62) thus points to the central role of the user in retrieval-based information systems, since ‘it is the user, with or without someone else acting as a mediator, who defines what information should be retrieved and takes action to retrieve it’

Retrieval-based information systems

- Buckland (1991: 30) looks at five kinds of retrieval-based information systems:
  - management information systems (MIS)
  - records management
  - archive services
  - library services
  - museums

Similarities and differences

- For Buckland (1991: 63), each of these information systems has distinctive features in terms of the:
  - Source of documents held
  - Form of documents held
  - Uniqueness of documents held
Source of materials

- **Material held in the systems are:**
  - Created (management information systems)
  - Received from inside the organisation (archives)
  - Received from outside the organisation (libraries, museums)
  - A combination (records management)

Form of materials

- **Material held in the systems is mainly:**
  - Coded data (management information system)
  - Text (archives, libraries, records management)
  - Objects (museums)

Uniqueness of materials

- **Material held in the systems are largely:**
  - Unique (archives, museums, records management)
  - Copies (management information system, libraries)
Further reading


Next lecture

*Why information management matters*

*The nature of information and knowledge*