Course Reflection

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My time spent in this course has been widely beneficial and unquestionably educational. The wide array of topics covered pertaining to information technology provided me with a well-rounded understanding of the current state of computer technology and how substantially it has positively altered the face of contemporary business practices.

Without question, the most widely beneficial exercise in the course was the creation of the website. For this assignment, I elected to use WordPress to set up a blog with the intention of generating interest in the idea of a visit to China. Prior to this exercise, I was entirely unfamiliar with the exact methodology behind website creation. First and foremost, the concept of WordPress was initially very foreign to me. Naturally, I had visited pages created using WordPress on numerous occasions, however in retrospect I was unaware of the fact that it was WordPress that was being used and especially clueless how to utilize the site in the event that I wanted to create my own site.

Having taken diligent notes over the course of the session—both mental and written—I now feel I have developed a considerable understanding of the site’s nature. As someone with particular interests in business, it is my firmly held belief that possessing knowledge regarding website development has a substantial amount of value creation potential for a business. With a reasonably sized foundation in web-page design, I feel as though I have an excellent platform established to expand upon this knowledge and use it to better market myself in the future.

This understanding was only furthered through the subsequent projects involving more thorough and complex web-page design. Starting with WordPress was particularly important to me, because it allowed me to get my bearings and gradually gain confidence in my ability to create a website rather than to abruptly immerse myself in it.

The website I wound up creating has very heightened degree of a professionalism that I would be entirely unable to have achieved prior to my enrollment in the class. I was entirely unaware of how to create and apply plug ins to the system. The balance of text, change in themes and application of images gave the website a very professional style and feel.

Apart from website formulation, I found it extraordinarily useful to figure out just how a website can be used to market an idea or a business. In addition to the aforementioned idea that a website can enhance the value of a company, it was unquestionably valuable to familiarize ourselves with a social media presence. I was previously unaware just how helpful social media can be in garnering attention for a company or idea.

Naturally, I knew that there was much more to social media than the sharing of personal content and information. What I didn’t know was how effective a well-executed social media presence can be for a business and exactly how to execute such a presence. Disregarding an/or failing to properly utilize social media to benefit a company is easily one of the most substantial mistakes a modern business can make.

I will be the first to admit that prior to my enrollment in the course, I had a very limited comprehension and familiarity with cloud computing and virtual infrastructure. While I admittedly knew of these concepts and technologies, it is safe to say that my familiarity did not extend very far past a general knowledge. It is one thing to learn about a concept but another thing entirely to be able to understand it well enough to be aware of its benefits and how it can be applied in a modern business setting.

The three types of cloud computing particularly intrigued me, and how they are essentially tailored to the various needs of a consumer. Prior to my enrollment in the course, I thought cloud computing was a one size fits all type of deal, in which one model was believed to be sufficient enough regardless of a business’s needs. As someone who is not extremely technologically savvy, I was fascinated by the idea of a public system of cloud computing. From a business owner’s perspective, I would personally rather my servers be located at an isolated location where they can be ran and maintained by a separate entity that specializes in cloud computing. Cloud computing seems like an indisputably essential move for modern contemporary businesses yet with all of the additional expenses that come with running and operating a business, the idea of purchasing servers which will only require further maintenance and upkeep fees is unappealing. I would much rather pay an outside company to do the job.

The previously mentioned vital nature of cloud computing was of great import. Through the research I conducted on cloud computing, and how it can benefit businesses, specifically retail companies, I immediately realized how much it can lend itself to the simplification of day to day operations. Problems such as over or under stocking will soon become a concept of the past when cloud computing consumes the retail industry and eases the stress of inventory upkeep.

Perhaps more than anything else, without oversimplifying or condensing the course’s curriculum, I learned just how modern computer based innovations have simplified a multitude of operations across numerous industries while enabling a previously unprecedented level of interconnectedness. To elaborate, virtual desktop infrastructure and cloud computing allow for remarkable unity within the workplace. The most interesting capability of the software is the feature allowing operations to be run from a centralized database. More specifically, if a problem occurs or a software update needs to be completed, it can be done from one central location, all at once. There is no need to go through one by one to each computer, and there is no need to schedule an appointment with employees and work around their schedules in order to do so. This innovation has allowed for tremendous amounts of time efficiency in the work place.

In a somewhat similar sense, it is immensely important to select and modify a LAN network to the specifications of company. Based on what I learned about them in the course, it seems most logical to own and operate the network in-house. This relative simplicity is contrasted with the seemingly more complex cloud computing servers. Given the limited errors including infrequent errors with data transmission and the limited problems resulting from fewer systems, a LAN network seems quite manageable.

Without question, one of the most transcendent themes of the course has been the prevalence of operating costs. Given the size and power of technologies like LANs, cloud computing, and data center management, the cost of installation, running and maintenance is a far cry from inexpensive. Through the segment on data center management, I realized that one of the most primary responsibilities of a CIO or any type of information technology manager is to be familiar with the costs of your operation. Data center management has the potential to be rife with hidden costs, many of which are either unnecessary or easily eradicated.

Implementing a more economically friendly data center is believed and proven to have numerous benefits to the company’s budget. Unfortunately, many companies are unwilling to pay this fee of initial installation and would rather devote their funds to other areas of the business. In many cases, the cost of acquisition is more daunting than long-term expenses.

Whether I am in a decision-making managerial position in which my expertise is held in high regard, or a lower-level employee, I feel the information and knowledge I have accrued regarding information technology and the like over the course of this session will provide be a tremendous amount of insight in a corporate world largely shaped by technology.