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**Discussion Post 6 – Legacy System**

 Discuss the needs to keep using legacy system and advantages & disadvantages of integrating a legacy system to a web based application compared to replacing a legacy system with a new system developed from scratch

Using Legacy Systems has become the new standard for many companies and has led to some pretty detrimental outcomes. Legacy Systems are essentially software systems that companies have been using that are not being updated or interchanged from their providers. Examples of this might be similar to buying a new car. If you purchased a car with the model year of 2018, chances are, that car by the year 2021 will not be able to be serviced for simple fixes from the dealer. This is because the manufacturer by this point has most likely stopped building the parts for the 2018 model year automobiles and has moved on to mainly building and fixing newer model year cars. This can relate to computers and software systems that companies own and use today. Many companies across the world are still using software that has been discontinued years ago, with no updates for security, UX/UI, and speed integration. This also goes for some of the hardware systems that these companies are using as well. Some of the benefits to still using a legacy System for many companies is the simplicity, lack of cost, and the ability for employees to work more efficiently. The reason that the employees would be working more efficiently is because the software and hardware is something that they have been used to using for years and are already aware of how it works. If a company is upgrading hardware and software systems, it would take a large amount of money for migration of data and installation of the new systems into the workplace. The real challenge however would be the learning curve for many of the employees to take what they had currently been doing and to upgrade their knowledge to be able to begin utilizing the new hardware and software systems that the company had just installed. In the article that had been posted this week from IT Business Edge, it states that around 75% of the world’s business data is processed on mainframes and written in the older language of Cobol. The problem in this scenario would be to migrate the data away from the mainframe and into databases that are held on other servers that would be able to be secured easier and duplicated for backup information. Also, the Cobol language has not been heavily used recently and is also therefore a threat to these companies as well. If the IT department in these companies wanted to update the system, they would have to rewrite the systems with newer languages that would be able to be read and maintained by newer developers in the company. This entire process would be an extreme expense for any company to undertake, especially the companies of larger stature. This alone is a reason that many companies have been hesitant to move away from their legacy systems that are working at the current moment. Coming from a newer developer and someone who is learning about the IT industry, I believe that moving away from legacy systems in any company would be the proper move. If the company does not have the money to fund this upfront, I believe that making smaller changes would be more beneficial over time than to just save up and run the risk of not changing anything. If any of these systems failed without being updated, this might lead to the company’s entire system to fall and not be able to be recovered. Also, with the lack of these systems being updated, this can lead to huge security flaws that are not going to be easily fixed or mitigated in the future. Websites like Glow Touch state that the current cost of maintaining a legacy system might in fact be more expensive than having the modernization of the system built. The main concern for continuing to use a legacy system by integrating it into your system is that it is not mobile friendly. Older legacy systems do not allow for mobile use and are usually cause a headache for business people when they are traveling and or are out of the office. The website states this as the fact that mobility is out of reach. Also, when you go to introduce new applications into your existing system, you will need to be able to completely separate the new systems from the older legacy systems for lack of integration. If the integration was successful, the users will be able to access all of the data in one place. In the event that it is not, integrated properly, you will have to think about fully upgrading to a newer system. Not all systems are compatible with integration.

Legacy Systems are interesting and I believe that companies should definitely evaluate all of their options. There is always the possibility that a legacy system cannot be properly integrated into your current system. If this is the case, maybe upgrading is the better solution. Obviously if the company is going to make one large upgrade overhaul, they are going to want to do this in one go. Economically, this may not be the right decision. This is where I believe companies should upgrade and train their employees with little bits at a time. In the long run, these companies and employees will be happier with better security, backups, and integration with other systems or software components that have already been modernized in their system.

Works Cited

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