

EVALUATING END-USER TRAINING PROGRAMS

By RadhaKanta Mahapatra
and Vincent S. Lai

With some planning and coordination, organizations can implement an evaluation scheme to get the most out of their computer skills training programs.

The pervasive use of IT makes knowledge of and the ability to use IT essential requirements, no matter what kind of work is being done. Whether in a government agency or a multinational corporation, inadequate IT skills by employees are sure to undermine the day-to-day functioning of any organization. End-user (EU) training [7], which helps employees acquire and hone their IT skills, plays a key role in ensuring the smooth operation of organizations in the information economy. How the lack of IT skills affects organizational performance is illustrated by two anecdotes:

Virus attack. While the "I Love You" virus affected millions of email users in 2000 and reportedly caused billions of dollars in lost business due to computer downtime and lost data, many companies found they could minimize their exposure to the attack through effective EU training and other preventive measures [2]; and

Application processing. When a new security protocol went into effect at the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service following the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the processing of thousands of applications was significantly delayed in its New York office due in part to a shortage of computer-trained personnel [3].