

# Information Africa organization E-workshop

**Theme: Generating Knowledge Products for institutional sustainability**

# **Entrepreneurial skills for information professional in contemporary society**

**By**

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# Objective of the study

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At the end of the workshop, we should be able to:

- Recognize the major resources needed to manage information
- Understand the evolution of information
- Evaluate the value and cost of information
- Acquire knowledge and entrepreneurial skills to required from information professionals
- Understand competences and skills required for marketing information product and services

# What is information

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Information can be identify as:

- The results from processing data
- The output from an ICT system
- Facts provided
- Evidence of authentication

# Who are information professionals

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- Chief Information Officers
- Human resources managers
- Program managers
- Information resources managers
- Senior administrators
- Librarians
- Records managers
- Archivists
- Curators
- IT Experts
- Fiscal officers
- Data processing staff

# Evolution of information

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- Horton and Marchand describes the development of information management strategies and techniques”. They claim this development comprises of five (5) stages:
  - Paperwork Management (19<sup>th</sup> century-1950s)
  - Centralization of data processing (1960s-early 1970s)
  - Information Resources Management (1970s-early 1980s)
  - Competitive Business Intelligence (1980s-1990s)
  - Strategic Information Management (1990s- 2000s)
  - **Knowledge Management (2000+)**

# Information Provision

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Information can be provided through:

- data
- voice
- text
- Image

With the aid of:

- Hardware and software systems

# Major resources needed to manage information

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- Human
- Finance
- Technological Advancement
- Materials and equipment
- Research and development (ideals)



# The value and cost of information

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- Value is a social construct,
- a shared belief,
  - which may vary in different social,
- economic,
- political and
- philosophical contexts.

# The value and cost of information(Contd...)

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- It has to be seen as something of fundamental value like money, capital goods, labour and raw materials;
- It is something with measurable characteristics, such as method of collection, uses, and a life cycle pattern;
- It is something that can be capitalized or expensed and cost accounting techniques can be used to control it;
- It is an input , which can be transformed into useful output(s) that is/are beneficial to achieving organizational goals and objectives.

# How to determine value and cost of Information

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- Quality
- Utility
- Impact on productivity
- Impact on effectiveness
- impact on financial position

# Planning

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- The goals of any Information professional during planning are to know the specific purpose and mission they stand for. These include:
  - Who should be the user group?
  - To whom the information services or products should be targeted?
  - To meet goals, select strategies to promote your products that will work best, be affordable, and reach your customers.
  - Create a plan of action that describes all the steps needed to carry out the strategies for meeting goals.
  - Find out what products (services) your users want, and their perception.
  - Evaluate how well you have done.

# Competences and skills required for marketing information product and services

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- In this contemporary age information professional need to adopt variety of techniques for marketing that would improve patronage and frequent access by users. These include,
  - Networking and collaboration
  - Meetings with government and NGO's for support
  - Focus group with targeted users to learn more about their needs
  - Partnering with the media to learn how to generate effective publicity
  - Using internal publishing for newsletters, flyers, brochures, bookmarks

# Competences and skills required for marketing information product and services(Contd...)



- Chandra, (2011) identifies the competency information professionals can adopt for marketing. They are:
  - Transparency and dynamism in library administration.
  - Innovation in information services.
  - Effective team work
  - Enhanced self confidence among information professionals.
  - Flexibility and adaptability in attitude.
  - Increased strong interpersonal relations.
  - Organizational development.

# Competences and skills required for marketing information product and services(Contd...)

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- Farkas (2011) outline the following levels of competence required by an information professional in marketing of information.
  - Project management skills
  - Ability to question and evaluate.
  - Evaluate the needs of all stakeholders.
  - Vision to translate the traditional information services into the online medium.
  - Critical technologies and ability to compare technologies. They should be able to compare different versions of software to figure out which will best meet their patrons' needs.
  - Ability to sell ideas

# Challenges

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- Increase in clientele, their variety, their demands, and their expectations.
- Increase in the initial or capital cost of information and information technology, and their need to leverage the technology.
- In the event of drying up of the public sponsorship and subsidy, the need to find alternative source of revenue.
- Complexity in ways of identifying clients and their requirements, and servicing them.



# Conclusion

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- Entrepreneurial skills in contemporary society is a
  - **necessity** and a
  - **must have** for any
  - **information professional.**

# References

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