The Management Information System and the Knowledge Infrastructure from the administrative perspective in an academic institute.

by Evangelos Ergen, Cohort18b (10 October 2011)
ergen@ergen.gr

The academic capitalism has implied institutes to develop strategies that are more sensitive to market principles and to cultivate a mentality of linking academia with the industry. To cope with this, it is necessary for an institute to adopt modern practices in terms of internal organization.

The diffusion of information and the knowledge infrastructure could be considered as two main areas for further evaluation in an institute, since these constitute the platform for delivering the education experience both to staff and students. From the administrative perspective, and for the central administration office, the problem is whether the flow of information should be centralized or decentralized as well as which will be the structure of the administration department in terms of handling the information. In addition, it is challenge to decide which will be the structure of the administration in terms of sharing the knowledge that acquires and how this could be effectively shared with all involved parts in the institute.

The method of outsourcing is always an alternative for a company, which could be proved cost effective and much more efficient but does an academic institute owns the same attributes with a company? Should the administration of information in an academic institute be outsourced in a third party company or this could be kept inside?

The administration of information creates knowledge which throughout time may turn to wisdom for the one that experiences them. Therefore, giving this opportunity of expertise to outside expert companies, expecting to get back a customized application, you transfer your knowledge or even your wisdom. Moreover, if the institute happens to be the leader in its area this could be more dangerous.

Thinking of business intelligence, which is a new challenge for the institutes, this could be a case to develop a competitive advantage.

Therefore, (a) the management information system of an institute and (b) the administrative knowledge infrastructure are crucial and important.

Questions:

Management information system	Knowledge infrastructure
1. Should the institute outsource the administration of its information system or keep it inside?	2. Should the institute invest in creating a business intelligence team to diffuse knowledge or keep a traditional network of sharing the knowledge through its formal channels of communication?

For example, deciding to establish a business intelligence unit inside the institute, this may undertake the responsibility of providing replies to the above two questions. In the next figure is given a model of operation.

The Business Intelligence Unit
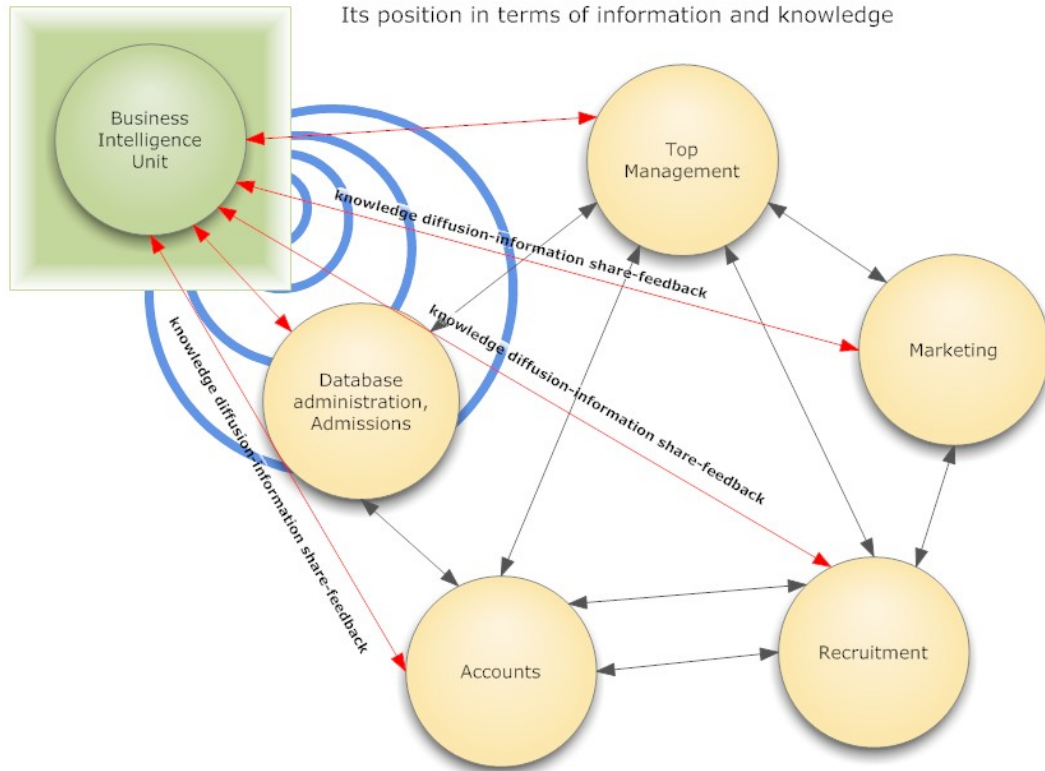
Its position in terms of information and knowledge

Figure 1. The Business Intelligence Unit