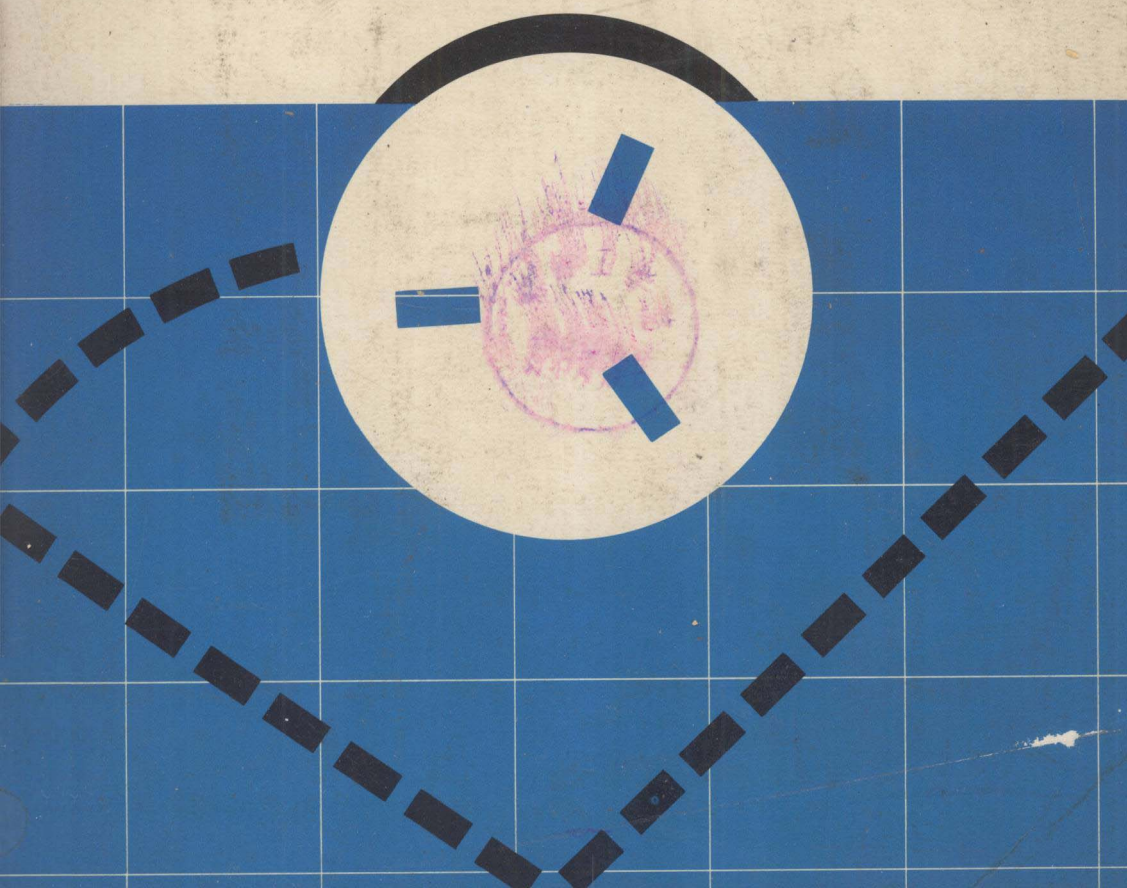


Donald H. Sanders and Stanley J. Birkin

Computers and Management In a Changing Society



Computers and Management

In a Changing Society

Third Edition

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COMPUTERS AND MANAGEMENT

In a Changing Society

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Computers and Management

In a Changing Society

To my mother, Irene.
D.H.S.

To my parents, Arthur and Sarah.
S.J.B.

Preface

Computers continue to play an ever-increasing role both in our everyday lives and in organizations of all types. Within these organizations the impact of computerization results in tremendous change and presents management in many situations with one of the most difficult of all contemporary challenges.

Colleges are now focusing much attention on the computer through courses in business administration and in the social and behavioral sciences. This increased attention is justified, since students destined to become managers in tomorrow's organizations will find themselves working in an environment significantly affected by the use of computer-based information systems. This is the case both in the business community and in the not-for-profit sector.

In order to prepare for a successful working relationship with these computerized information systems, present and potential managers must (1) learn about the computer—what it is, what it can and cannot do, and how it operates—and (2) acquire an understanding of the managerial and social implications of computer usage.

Many introductory data processing courses emphasize the first of these needs; they employ textbooks and/or manuals which are technically oriented and which are designed to provide the necessary grasp of hardware and programming concepts. Such courses are valuable and needed. However, they often do

not deal with the broad impact that computers have had, are having, and may be expected to have on managers and on the environment in which managers work.

The purpose of this book is to provide the broad managerial orientation which is needed. More specifically, this volume (1) explains why knowledge of information processing is required (and in so doing introduces readers to some basic information processing concepts); (2) points out the managerial implications of computer usage to many whose data processing preparation is not likely to be extensive; (3) discusses some of the ways in which computers may possibly influence the society in which managers live and work; and (4) provides, in a single source, *relevant readings* taken from leading publications and written by respected authorities.

TEXT ORGANIZATION

In *Chapter 1*, the subject of management information is examined. The data processing steps necessary to produce such information are identified; the need for (and the importance of) management information is presented; and the desired properties of quality information are discussed. The concluding pages of the chapter are devoted to a study of the evolution of information processing.

Chapter 2 focuses attention on the information processing revolution which is now under way. Topics treated in this chapter include (1) the technological, social, and economic changes that provide the setting for sweeping informational changes and (2) the new management information systems being developed to enable administrators to cope with rapid environmental change. This chapter explains, in part, why future managers must have knowledge of information processing.

Chapter 3 is an orientation chapter which presents a broad-brush treatment of the implications of computer usage for management and society. Also included are analyses of the potential benefits of computers and a discussion of the negative implications of computerization. *Chapters 4 through 7* examine the problems and issues related to the areas of planning, organizing, staffing, and controlling.

Chapter 8, the final chapter, considers the use and impact of computers in not-for-profit organizations such as those in the fields of health, law, government, and social services. Even though many facets of computer usage are standard across all areas, these nonprofit organizations merit special attention because of their relatively new use of computers and because of the significance of the implications for society as a whole.

CHANGES IN THIS EDITION

This edition contains a significant number of changes. Among the more important changes are:

- The expansion and updating of the treatment given to important contemporary topics such as data-base systems and MIS applications.

- The replacement of the majority of the readings found in the second edition with more current articles.
- The development and inclusion of new cases replacing most of those in the second edition. (These cases can be used as starting points for discussion of the text material in the chapters.)
- The addition of an *entirely new chapter*, "Computers in Not-for-Profit Organizations," which focuses on the usage of computers in these types of organizations.

USE OF THIS BOOK

Computers and Management requires no mathematical or data processing background and is designed to be used (1) in introductory data processing courses (it will supplement the programming books and manuals used in technically oriented courses and can be used as a readings book regardless of the course orientation); (2) in basic management courses, where it will serve to impress upon management students the importance of the computer as a managerial tool; (3) in introductory systems-analysis courses, where it will expose potential analysts to the effects which their proposed systems changes are likely to have on managers and on the managerial environment; and (4) in business and not-for-profit organizations where managers will find in this volume a concise presentation of current trends and future expectations in the area of business information systems.

It would be inappropriate to conclude these opening remarks without acknowledging the contributions of those publishers and authors who have granted permission for their materials to be used as readings in this book. Their individual contributions are mentioned in the body of the book.

Donald H. Sanders
Stanley J. Birkin

Computers and Management

In a Changing Society

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Management Information: Introductory Concepts

Just under 30 years ago, the first general-purpose computer was installed at the U.S. Bureau of the Census. At the time, it was considered little more than a scientific curiosity, and its future use was projected to be limited to a few applications, mostly scientific and statistical in nature. This was a time when the data processing world was preoccupied with tabulating card systems. Few individuals were able to envision the ultimate growth and impact of the computer industry and computer usage in organizations. In a special report in *Dun's Review*, it has been projected that by 1985 there may be as many as a half a million computers installed in the United States.¹ In other words, there will be one computer for every business with over 50 employees. Furthermore, as an industry, the information system business is expected to grow at an annual rate exceeding 20 percent for the next decade, reaching the \$82 billion level by 1985.²

The whirlwindlike growth of computer usage in many types of organizations

¹"Management and the Computer," *Dun's Review*, July 1977, p. 65.

²Edward W. Pullen and Robert G. Simko, "Our Changing Industry," *Datamation*, January 1977, p. 55.