

# Analysis & Design of Information Systems

James A. Senn

Second  
Edition



# ANALYSIS and DESIGN of INFORMATION SYSTEMS

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James A. Senn

*Georgia State University*

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## **ANALYSIS AND DESIGN OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS**

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# Preface

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## TO THE STUDENT

For many organizations, computer information systems are now at the heart of daily activities and a major consideration in corporate decision making. Businesses consider carefully their information systems capabilities when deciding whether or not to enter new markets or when planning a response to competition. Without automated assistance, government organizations would grind to a halt for the sheer volume of activities would overwhelm workers and managers. Also, data communications capabilities determine where and when information will flow.

The development of information systems involves both systems analysts and those who will use the applications that emerge—end-users. The analysis and design of information systems involve many parts of the organization and are not limited to the domain of computer specialists. We will emphasize this theme—user-driven applications—throughout this book.

We will discuss each of the activities associated with developing a computer-based information system. You will learn how to identify system requirements, including methods of collecting requirements data, how to interact with managers and users, and how to document system details through various methods. We will discuss the design of such new system features as reports and displays, including the use of color and graphics. Together, we will examine methods for detecting errors in input data and for preventing unexpected user activities from producing unintentional results.

It is not necessary for you to have an extensive business background or even an intention of pursuing a career in information systems to benefit from this text. You may be a business person—a user—who expects to interact with systems analysts or computer programmers and wants to have a better understanding of their work so that you can work more effectively with them. Or you may want to collect knowledge so you can manage analysts responsible for a project in your department. In either case, you will benefit from this text.

Some of you might also be computer programmers or computer engineers planning to move into the area of systems analysis in the future. In the latter case, your expertise in computer programming will be a useful supplement to the methods of systems analysis and design as we will discuss them.

This book contains a number of tools to show you the real-world view of systems development. Each chapter features the information

systems experience of a well-known firm or a particularly important issue faced by companies you know well. You will see how such corporations as McDonald's, AT&T, Polaroid, Delta Air Lines, Lockheed Aeronautical Systems Company-Georgia (and more) develop and use information technology effectively.

Each chapter begins with a vignette describing a situation you may encounter in an organization. These situations should make you think about how you would react if you were the one faced with the dilemma. I think you will find them challenging.

Several times in each chapter you will encounter a "benchmark"—a pause from the regular flow of text that is designed to further emphasize the practical perspective of the concepts and techniques being discussed. Each benchmark is my personal assessment of where a particular systems development issue fits in the reality of organizations.

Other study tools available in this book include a set of questions at the beginning of each chapter that addresses the most important issues in the chapter as well as key terms to watch for as you read the chapter. After finishing the chapter, look back and see if you can answer the questions. A summary is included at the end of every chapter to highlight further the main points of the reading and assist you in answering the review questions which follow.

Throughout the book there are many examples and over two hundred illustrations that demonstrate what systems analysts do to determine the feasibility of developing a computer-based system. Sometimes, their decisions are against development altogether. These examples are based on real situations in which I have been involved as a consultant, analyst, or designer of a system.

The concepts and theories underlying systems analysis and design are woven through the book so that you can develop an understanding of why certain questions must be addressed and learn how various decisions are made. Emphasis is placed on practical aspects of system development—decisions that analysts must face every day when working on a project. Through the many examples and illustrations, you will gain a detailed understanding of the work of the systems analyst. If you take the time to work through the application problems at the end of each chapter, you will reinforce principles presented in the chapter and gain experience in making decisions that you may actually face one day in business. Developing the answers to these questions, which are based on real-life problems, will not always be easy and may involve more than just a minute or two of thought. For that there is no apology. The amount of time you invest now will determine your payoff in the future.

## TO THE INSTRUCTOR

Systems analysis and design is a challenge to teach to students in a classroom environment because it is out of the context in which applications are generally created. So much of systems analysis and design depends on tools, experiences, and situations that are difficult to recreate in the typical classroom. The course, therefore, frequently consists of a heavy emphasis on theory, and insufficient attention given to applications.

This book goes beyond classroom theory and concepts. It is practice-oriented with examples, applications, and proven techniques that *demonstrate* systems analysis and design. In addition, actual organization and business settings are used in the examples to show how systems concepts can apply to many different types of enterprises.

The text is designed to be used in a semester or quarter course in systems analysis and design. It introduces topics in an order most easily grasped by students: The early chapters focus on feasibility studies and requirements determination, the later chapters are oriented toward design specification and implementation. Software design and testing specification are discussed in detail, with repeated emphasis on maintaining system quality.

Questions in project management and the selection of computer hardware and software, discussed in Chapters 16 and 17, are raised in virtually every aspect of systems development. Students may find it helpful to refer to these chapters repeatedly throughout the course.

Particular emphasis is placed on development methods, tools, and techniques. Prototyping, structured analysis, and the traditional systems development life cycle model are discussed candidly. Both their strengths and their shortcomings are pointed out. Computer-aided systems engineering (CASE) tools are the subject of a full chapter. In addition, specific CASE tools including Excelerator<sup>™</sup> are used in applications as they are discussed in other sections of the book. The perspective is pragmatic, pointing out how CASE fits into the development process, emphasizing both strengths and weaknesses of these tools, and exploring the characteristics needed in future generations of CASE tools.

Data communication and networks, increasingly common in information systems of all sizes, distributed or not, are examined in detail. A separate chapter is devoted to the design decisions the analyst must address in developing computer networks, choosing communication links, and acquiring communication facilities.

To provide students with an active learning environment where they can master concepts, several learning aids and special features are found in the book including:

- Key questions at the beginning of each chapter

- Chapter objectives framed around skills to be developed
- Key terms listed in each chapter
- A chapter-opening vignette featuring a lifelike situation which is pertinent to the chapter
- Corporate boxes highlighting information systems experiences of well-known companies
- Professional “toolboxes” stressing career development
- Special pause points in each chapter—benchmarks—that emphasize broad, practical perspectives to the concepts and techniques discussed
- Chapter summaries
- Review questions
- Application problems that apply the concepts, tools, and techniques of the chapter in practical settings

It is important for students to follow the development of lifelike systems as they study different analysis and design concepts. To assist you in achieving this objective, I have captured a live systems project, Sevco Industries, and included portions of it throughout the text. This classroom tested case study involves an order entry/accounts receivable system that is common in many organizations.

After each major topic in the text, the concepts and techniques are applied to the case study, including a feasibility study and a detailed investigation. Data flow diagrams and data dictionary entries are assembled to document the system. In the output and input design areas, reports, display screens, and interactive menus are shown to indicate how the previous user requirements are translated into design specifications and processing methods. Since the system requires data communication facilities, the design that was assembled to provide the necessary transmission capabilities is also shown. By the time the students read Chapter 15 on implementation of the system, they will realize that implementation actually begins during requirements determination and takes place throughout the development process. This chapter will pinpoint additional implementation issues.

To augment the text, *Analysis and Design of Information Systems* is complemented by a full teaching and learning package including:

- *Study Guide*. An all-new study guide has been prepared to accompany the second edition and includes additional self-testing questions and problems, three case studies, and a glossary to assist your students in mastering the material. Worksheets and forms are also included for use in systems development assignments.
- *Instructor's Manual*. A new instructor's manual provides additional support for the text. It includes instructional strategies,



suggested readings, answers to application problems and review questions from the text, a special appendix on cost-benefit analysis, and a set of transparency masters.

- *Test Bank.* A test bank, containing approximately 2,000 questions in both hard copy and computerized format, has been created to accompany the text. There are three types of questions: true-false, multiple choice, and completion. These carefully selected questions emphasize important topics in the text and allow the instructor to prepare a wide range of tests.

The entire text and its accompanying tools have been developed to give the students a practical, applications-oriented understanding of systems analysis and design. It applies equally well to large mainframe and small personal computers. The up-to-date analyst should be familiar with both.

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*James A. Senn*



# Contents

---

## Part One: Introduction to Information Systems Development 1

---

### 1. Introduction to Information Systems Development 2

Systems Analyst: A Profession Worth Pursuing?	3		
In Perspective	5		
Working Smarter	5	<i>Benchmark</i>	
Global Blurring of Industries	6	The Interdependence of Systems and Subsystems	26
Ideas and Information	6	Systems Development Strategies	26
Users: Information Workers	6	Classical Systems Development Life Cycle	27
The Burden of Responsibility	7	Determination of System Requirements	30
What Is Systems Analysis and Design?	9	Design of System	30
Overview of Systems Analysis and Design	9	Development of Software	31
What Systems Analysis Is NOT	11	Systems Testing	31
Systems Analysts' Work	12	Implementation and Evaluation	32
Responsibility for Computer Programming	12	Structured Analysis Development Method	34
Changes in Systems Analysts' Responsibilities	13	Systems Prototype Method	37
Who Are the Users?	14	Reasons for Systems Prototyping	37
<i>Benchmark</i>		Methods for Prototype Development	40
Successful Information Systems: A Joint Effort	16	<i>Benchmark</i>	
Business Systems Concepts	16	Which Development Method Is the Right One?	40
What Is a System?	16	Tools for Systems Development	41
Important Systems Characteristics	17	Analysis Tools	41
Business Systems	19	Design Tools	42
Business Information Systems	20	Development Tools	42
Categories of Information Systems	21	Summary	42
Transaction Processing Systems	21	Review Questions	44
Management Information Systems	23	Application Problems	45
Decision Support Systems	25	References	47
Scope of Information Systems	25		

---

### 2. Managing the Application Development Portfolio 48

The Good Old Days of Information Systems	49	Information Systems Planning	
How Systems Projects Are Begun	51	Methodologies	63
Reasons for Project Proposals	52	Sources of Project Requests	64
<i>Benchmark</i>		Managing Project Review and Selection	67
Corporate Mission and the Role of Information Systems	63	Steering Committee Method	67

Information Systems Committee		<i>Benchmark</i>	
Method	69	Preliminary Investigation of User-	
User-Group Committee Method	70	Developed Applications	79
Other Methods	71	Selecting the Project Development	
<i>Benchmark</i>		Strategy	80
Steering the Course in Information		Institutional Versus End-User	
Systems Development	71	Applications	80
Managing the Portfolio Direction	72	End-User Development Approach	81
Integrating the Application Portfolio	73	Development Strategies for	
The Project Request	74	Institutional Applications	85
Preliminary Investigation	74	Summary	86
Scope of Study	75	Review Questions	88
Conducting the Investigation	77	Application Problems	89
Testing Project Feasibility	77	References	92
Handling Infeasible Projects	79	<i>Case Study Phase 1</i>	
		Sevco Industries: A Profile	93

---

<b>Part Two: Requirements Analysis and Determination</b>	<b>101</b>
--	------------

---

<b>3. Tools for Determining Systems Requirements</b>	<b>102</b>
--	------------

The Receiving-Room Fiasco	103	<i>Benchmark</i>	
What Is Requirements		Fact Finding: A Challenge and an	
Determination?	105	Opportunity	118
Activities in Requirements		Tools for Documenting Procedures	
Determination	106	and Decisions	119
Basic Requirements	107	Decision Concepts	120
User Transaction Requirements	111	Decision Trees	122
User Decision Requirements	112	Decision Tables	126
Organization-Wide Requirements	114	Types of Table Entries	131
<i>Benchmark</i>		<i>Benchmark</i>	
When the Exception Is the Rule	114	Making Good Use of Analysis Tools	134
Fact-Finding Techniques	115	Structured English	138
Interview	115	Summary	143
Questionnaire	116	Review Questions	144
Record Review	117	Application Problems	145
Observation	118	References	147

<b>4. Structured Analysis Development Strategy</b>	<b>148</b>
--	------------

Static or Not: That's the Question	149		
Structured Analysis	151	<i>Benchmark</i>	
What Is Structured Analysis?	152	Data Flow Tools: Beyond Analysis	155
What Is Data Flow Analysis?	153	Notation	157
Features of Data Flow Strategy	154	Parallel Activities	158
Tools of Data Flow Strategy	154	Advantages of Data Flow Analysis	159

Developing Data Flow Diagrams	162	Why Is a Data Dictionary	
Development Process	162	Important?	185
<i>Benchmark</i>		What Does a Data Dictionary	
Using Physical and Logical Data Flow		Record?	187
Diagrams	176	Describing Data Elements	188
General Rules for Drawing Logical		Describing Data Structures	191
Flow Data Diagrams	176	Notation in the Data Dictionary	197
Explode Processes for More Detail	177	Recording Data Descriptions	198
Maintain Consistency Between		Defining Data Flows and Stores	198
Processes	179	Defining Data Structures	199
Follow Meaningful Leveling		Describing Processes	200
Conventions	179	Using the Data Dictionary Details	200
Add Control on Lower-Level		<i>Benchmark</i>	
Diagrams Only	179	The Data Dictionary	202
Evaluate Data Flow Diagram for		Summary	205
Correctness	182	Review Questions	206
Features of a Data Dictionary	184	Application Problems	207
What Is a Data Dictionary?	184	References	211

## 5. Application Prototype Development Strategy 212

Test Drive	213	Personal Computers	232
Purpose of Application Prototyping	215	Libraries of Reusable Code	233
Uses of Application Prototyping	215	Prototype Strategies	234
Rationale for Application		Prototype the Screens Only	234
Prototyping	216	Prototype the Processing	
Candidate Applications	218	Procedures Only	235
Steps in Prototype Method	219	Prototype the Mainline Functions	
Identify Known Requirements	221	Only	236
Develop Working Model	221	<i>Benchmark</i>	
User Prototype	223	Fitting Prototyping Tools to the Task	
Review Prototype	223	at Hand	237
Repeat as Needed	224	Misconceptions About Prototyping	238
Use of Prototypes	224	A Trivial Activity	238
Abandon Application	224	For Small Applications Only	238
Implement Prototype	225	For Simple Applications Only	238
Redevelop Application	225	Token User Involvement	238
Begin New Prototype	226	A Prototyping Example	239
<i>Benchmark</i>		Voice-Mail Application	239
Starting Point: Understand User		Second Iteration	241
Requirements	226	Third Iteration	243
Tools for Prototyping	227	Fourth Iteration	243
Fourth-Generation Languages	227	Full Implementation	244
Report Generators	229	Summary	245
Application Generators	230	Review Questions	246
Screen Generators	231	Application Problems	246
Data Dictionary Systems	232	References	249

<b>6. Computer-Aided Systems Tools</b>	<b>250</b>
Automating the Art	251
Role of Tools	252
Benefits of Using Tools	252
Benefits of Computer-Assisted Tools	254
Categories of Automated Tools	256
Front-End Tools	256
Back-End Tools	256
Integrated Tools	257
<i>Benchmark</i>	
Use of Automated Tools	259
Computer-Assisted Systems	
Engineering (CASE) Tools	260
CASE Components	260
Integrating Tools in CASE	263
Using a CASE Tool	266
Getting Started	267
Main Facilities Menu	267
Drawing Data Flow Diagrams	267
<i>Benchmark</i>	
CASE Tools: Looking Ahead	277
Assessment of CASE	277
Benefits of CASE	277
Weaknesses of CASE	278
<i>Benchmark</i>	
Keeping CASE Tools in Perspective	281
Summary	282
Review Questions	283
Application Problems	283
References	284
<i>Case Study Phase II</i>	
Systems Analysis of Sevco Industries	286

---

<b>Part Three: Systems Design</b>	<b>321</b>
-----------------------------------	------------

---

<b>7. The Analysis-to-Design Transition</b>	<b>322</b>
A Token User?	323
Specifying Application Requirements	325
Investigation Objectives	325
Analysis of Facts	325
Sample Analysis	331
Identification of Requirements	333
Selection of Requirements	
Fulfillment Strategies	334
Objectives in Designing an	
Information System	336
Specify the Logical Design Elements	337
Support Business Activities	338
Ensure That System Features Meet	
User Requirements	338
<i>Benchmark</i>	
Fitting the System to the Organization	339
Provide a System Engineered for	
Ease of Use by People	339
Provide Detailed Software	
Development Specifications	340
Conform to Design Standards	341
What Features Must Be Designed?	341
Elements of the Design	342
Design of Output	342
Design of Files	343
Design of Database Interactions	343
Design of Input	344
Design of Control	346
Design of Procedures	346
Design of Program Specifications	346
<i>Benchmark</i>	
Maintenance: Keeping the System	
Useful	347
Managing the Design Process for	
Institutional Applications	348
Obtaining "Deliverables"	
Describing System Design	348
Monitoring Design Process	349
Selecting Hardware and Software	350
Involving Users	350
Managing End-User Developed	
Systems	351
End-User Design Responsibilities	352
Systems Analysts' Responsibilities	352
Summary	355
Review Questions	356
Application Problems	357
References	359
<i>Case Study Phase III</i>	
From Analysis to Design at Sevco	
Industries	360

---

<b>8. Design of Computer Output</b>	<b>370</b>
A Picture for a Thousand Words	371
How to Identify Computer Output	
Needs	372
Output Objectives	373
Types of Output	375
Key Output Questions	376
<i>Benchmark</i>	
Designing Computer Output:	
When Less Is Better	377
How to Present Information	378
Tabular Format	378
Graphic Format	381
Color Presentation	391
Designing Printed Output	392
Printed Reports	392
Developing a Printed Output	
Layout	398
Designing Printed Output	400
Designing Visual Display Output	406
Layout of Display Screens	407
<i>Benchmark</i>	
Display Screens	407
Screen Design	407
Summary	414
Review Questions	415
Application Problems	415
References	417
<b>9. Design of Input and Control</b>	<b>420</b>
Manual Is Cheaper	421
What Concerns Guide Input Design?	423
Objectives of Input Design	423
Capturing Data for Input	425
Data Capture Guidelines	425
Design of Source Document	426
<i>Benchmark</i>	
State-of-the-Art Forms Generation	440
Input Validation	441
Checking the Transaction	441
Transaction Validation	442
Checking the Transaction Data	444
Modifying the Transaction Data	447
<i>Benchmark</i>	
Input Validation: Keeping Up with	
Changing Needs	449
Summary	451
Review Questions	452
Application Problems	452
References	455
<b>10. Design of Online Dialogue</b>	<b>456</b>
Second Nature	457
How Is Online Different?	458
Immediate Response to User	
Requests	459
Less Predictable Demand	459
Direct Contact Between System	
and User	459
What Is an Interface?	460
Purpose of Interface	460
Characteristics of Interface	461
<i>Benchmark</i>	
Interface Devices	462
Actions Occurring at Interface	462
Designing Dialogue	465
Dialogue Charts	465
Dialogue Design Decisions	467
Dialogue Strategies	468
Menu-Driven Dialogue	468
Keyword Dialogue	473
<i>Benchmark</i>	
Artificial Intelligence	475
Question/Answer Dialogue	475
Data Entry Dialogues	475
Data Entry Templates	476
Question/Answer Prompt	476
Editing in Online Systems	478
Screen Management	480
<i>Benchmark</i>	
Selecting Dialogue Strategies in	
Specific Applications	492
Summary	493
Review Questions	494
Application Problems	495
References	499
<i>Case Study Phase IV</i>	
Design of Output and Input for	
Sevco Industries	500

<b>11. Design of Files and Use of Auxiliary Storage Devices</b>	<b>530</b>
Fall Out for Roll Call!	531
Basic File Terminology	532
Data Item	532
Record	534
Record Key	536
Entity	536
File	536
Databases	536
Data Structure Diagrams	537
Purpose	537
Notation	537
Use in File Design	537
Types of Files	538
Master File	538
Transaction File	539
Table File	541
Report File	541
Other Files	543
Methods of File Organization	543
Sequential Organization	543
Direct-Access Organizations	546
Indexed Organization	551
<i>Benchmark</i>	
Storage Structures	556
Magnetic Tape	556
Storing Data on Magnetic Tape	556
Sequential File Processing	559
Magnetic Disk	561
Disk Layout and Design	561
Track/Cylinder Addressing	561
Track/Sector Addressing	564
Disk Storage Capacity	564
Timing Determination	565
Backup and Recovery of Files	565
Potential Causes of Data Loss	565
Backup Methods	566
Summary	568
Review Questions	570
Application Problems	570
References	573
<b>12. Design of Database Interactions</b>	<b>574</b>
Hold the Sidewalks!	575
Systems Development in a Database	
Environment	576
Relationships in Data	576
Data Structure Diagrams	580
<i>Benchmark</i>	
Entity Relationships:	
A Key to Managing Change	583
The Impact of Database Management Systems on Systems Design	583
Data Models	588
Structuring the Data	590
Normalization	592
Data Manipulation	597
Hierarchical Data Model	599
Network Data Model	601
<i>Benchmark</i>	
The Database Administrator	603
Design in a Database Environment	603
Summary	605
Review Questions	606
Application Problems	607
References	608
<b>13. Design for Data Communications</b>	<b>610</b>
Why Not Lease?	611
Requirements for Data	
Communications Systems	612
Communications Channels	612
Communications Control Devices	623
Protocol	628
Selecting the Right Communications Configuration	630
Communications Networks	632
Network Topologies	633
OSI Interconnect Model	635
<i>Benchmark</i>	
Overcoming Barriers of Time and Distance	639
Vendor Network Architectures	639
Value-Added Carriers	642
Design of Local Area Networks	645
LAN Characteristics	645
Channels	647
LAN Access Methods	648
PBX/CBX LANs	652
Interfaces and Gateways	653

Distributed Systems	653	Design of File Processing in a	
Concept of a Distributed System	655	Communications Environment	662
Characteristics of Distributed		Processing Validation	662
Systems	655	Audit Trail	664
Reasons for Designing Distributed		File Handling	666
Systems	657	Summary	668
Distributed Processing System:		Review Questions	669
An Example	659	Application Problems	670
<i>Benchmark</i>		References	673
The Transparent Transformation of		<i>Case Study Phase V</i>	
Data Communications	661	Design of Files and Communications	
		Capabilities for Sevco Industries	674

---

<b>Part Four: Implementation, Development Management, and Selection of Hardware and Software</b>	<b>687</b>
--	------------

---

<b>14. Systems Engineering and Quality Assurance</b>	<b>688</b>
--	------------

How Tested Is "Tested"?	689	Warnier/Orr Diagrams	713
Design Objectives	690	Managing Quality Assurance	717
Designing Reliable Systems	691	Levels of Assurance	717
Designing Maintainable Systems	694	<i>Benchmark</i>	
Program Structure Charts	696	Assessing Systems Reliability:	
Purpose of Structure Charts	696	The Customer Is in Control	718
Notation	697	Testing Strategies	719
Data Passing	698	Managing Testing Practices	721
Design of Software	698	Levels of Tests	721
Top-Down Structure of Modules	699	<i>Benchmark</i>	
Coupling	700	Documentation:	
Cohesion	703	Maintaining Credibility	727
Span of Control	706	Designing Test Data	728
Module Size	706	Testing Libraries	729
Shared Modules	707	Summary	730
Software Design and Documentation		Review Questions	731
Tools	707	Application Problems	732
Structured Flowcharts	707	References	735
HIPO	710		

---

<b>15. Managing System Implementation</b>	<b>736</b>
---	------------

Home for the Holidays	737	<i>Benchmark</i>	
Training	739	Management's Perspective on	
Training Systems Operators	739	Training	744
User Training	740	Conversion	746
Training Methods	742	Conversion Methods	746



<i>Benchmark</i>		Review Methods	759
Preparedness: Making Direct		Summary	761
Cutover Work	749	Review Questions	763
Conversion Plan	751	Application Problems	763
Site Preparation	754	References	766
<i>Benchmark</i>		<i>Case Study Phase VI</i>	
Finding the Weak Links in a System	755	Processing Design and	
Data and File Preparation	755	Implementation of the New	
Postimplementation Review	758	System at Sevco Industries	767
Review Questions	758		
<hr/>			
<b>16. Managing Information Systems Development</b>			<b>786</b>
A Best Guess at Best	787	Project Team Concepts	804
Estimation and Management of		Structured Walkthroughs	807
Development Time	788	<i>Benchmark</i>	
Estimating Time Requirements	789	Outside Consultants	813
<i>Benchmark</i>		Summary	814
Estimation: Meeting the Challenge	803	Review Questions	815
Personnel and Development		Application Problems	816
Management	804	References	817
<hr/>			
<b>17. Hardware and Software Selection</b>			<b>818</b>
What You See Is What You Get	819		
Hardware Selection	820	Software Selection	833
Determining Size and Capacity		Evaluation of Software	833
Requirements	820	<i>Benchmark</i>	
Computer Evaluation and		Sales Representatives Are	
Measurement	822	Knowledgeable Experts	839
Plug-Compatible Equipment	825	Software Contracts	839
Financial Factors	825	Summary	841
Maintenance and Support	828	Review Questions	843
<i>Benchmark</i>		Application Problems	844
"Used" Systems: Previously		References	845
Owned Can Be Like New	832		
<hr/>			
<b>Index</b>			<b>846</b>
<hr/>			

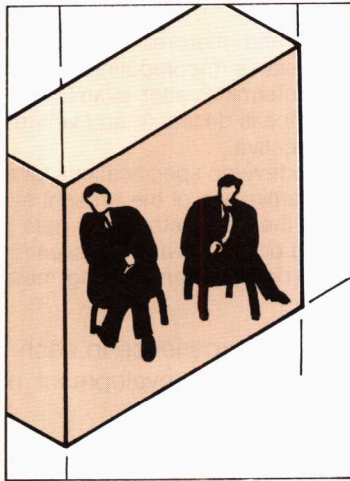
Part One comprises two chapters (1 and 2). The purpose of these chapters is to provide an introduction to the process of systems development and to define basic terminology used in systems analysis and design.

Chapter 1 presents an overview of information systems in a global,

# PART ONE

## Introduction to Information Systems Development

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information-based economy and explores the roles of information system users. It defines systems analysis and design and outlines the responsibilities of systems analysts. This chapter also introduces system concepts and outlines categories of business information systems, concluding with a discussion of strategies and tools used in systems development.

Chapter 2 looks at how systems projects are initiated and describes methods by which projects are reviewed and selected. It also explains the preliminary investigation and the processes of testing the operational, technical, and economic feasibility of a project. This chapter concludes with specific project development strategies for institutional- and user-developed applications.