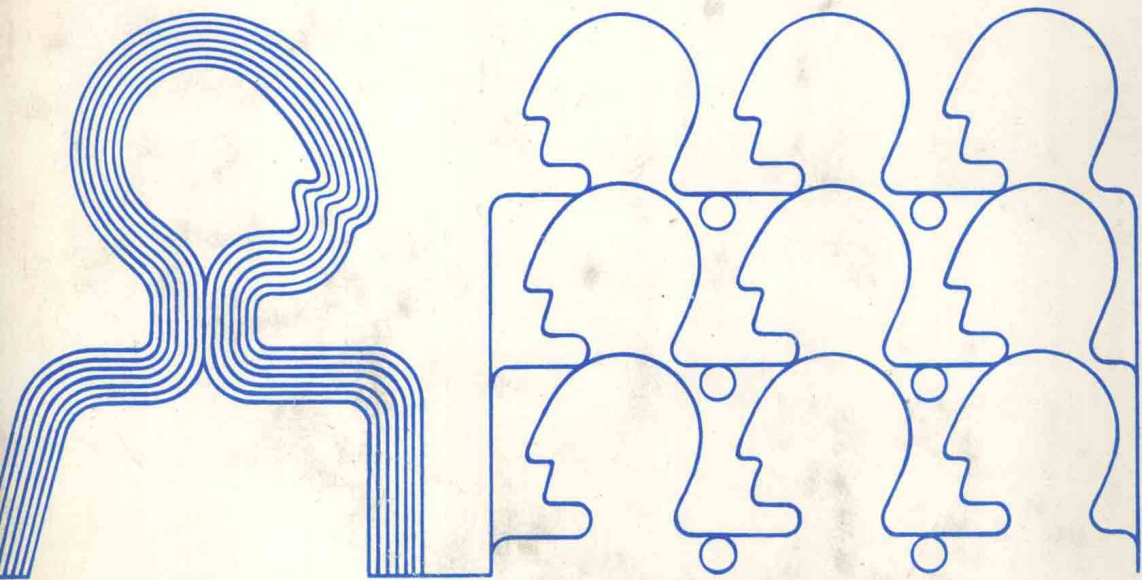


STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR MIS



Ephraim R. McLean & John V. Soden

Strategic Planning for MIS

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McKinsey & Company, Inc.

With a Special Contribution by George A. Steiner

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April 10-11, 1974

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But the principal failing occurred in
the sailing,
And the Bellman perplexed and distressed,
Said he had hoped, at least, when the
wind blew due East
That the ship would not travel due West!

GEORGE A. STEINER

Los Angeles, California
July 1976

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EPHRAIM R. MCLEAN
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Los Angeles, California
New York, New York
July 1976

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Introduction

1

The Planning Challenge for MIS

Mark Twain's remark about the weather might well be applied to planning: "Everyone talks about it, but nobody does anything about it." The importance of planning for improved managerial effectiveness is widely endorsed by practitioners and academics alike. In fact, given the accelerating pace of change in almost every aspect of the economy, planning is frequently touted as the key to success, if not to survival. But as our paraphrase implies, the gap between interest and achievement in the planning area is great. Faced with the pressing problems of day-to-day operations, many executives have neither the time nor the inclination to invest in planning for the longer term. However a number of major organizations in the United States *are* doing something about planning—in particular, about planning for management information services. This book is about their efforts.

The term "MIS," standing for either management information *systems* or management information *services*, is being used increasingly throughout the world to refer to the cluster of activities that surround the computer and its supporting personnel. However it is more than the data processing department alone, for it includes the planning, analysis, and design activities, as well as the operational functions, which are necessary for effective computer-based information systems to serve corporate needs. For this reason, many MIS groups go under the broader title of "management services," incorporating not only the