

MIS USERS GROUPS

Definition

A **Management Information Systems (MIS) Users Group** is an internal committee of users of corporate computer services with similar interests, who represent the MIS user community to MIS management. Members share experiences and ideas to improve their understanding and use of computer systems, and to identify needed operational system improvements.

Statement of Purpose—Charter

The Management Information Systems (MIS) department has responsibility for supporting the organization's computing and information management needs. This responsibility entails providing centralized computing resources as well as supporting the organization's distributed computing environment. To be successful, MIS must work closely and effectively with the user community to ensure user satisfaction with existing MIS services and to assess what improvements to support services are needed.

A MIS Users Group can be very helpful in ensuring that strong and effective interactions are maintained between users and MIS. This group should interface with the existing Information Systems Steering Committee (ISSC) or, if one is not in place, with the Chief Information Officer (CIO) or equivalent. The MIS Users Group serves as the users' advocate to MIS on system performance and usability.

The objectives of the MIS Users Group are to:

1. Provide a forum in which users can discuss areas of mutual interest and needs
2. Provide a forum in which MIS and other departments or divisions can communicate to computer users new developments and trends in information systems
3. Advise and consult on services provided by MIS with the goals of enhancing communications, identifying and addressing common problems, and maximizing the effectiveness of services provided
4. Advise MIS management on service improvements needed, which affect a broad spectrum of the organization's MIS users

The members of the MIS Users Group should be appointed by their respective supervisors (division directors, department heads) to serve terms of finite length. Every division or department that is a significant user of MIS services should be represented. The members select the Chair and Secretary of the MIS Users Group.

Conducting Meetings

Meetings are nominally held monthly; special meetings may be held as often as needed. Meetings should be open to all interested computer users. From time to time, the Chair may form standing or ad hoc subcommittees as needed to concentrate on specific problems, software products or implementation projects.

Topics for discussion in MIS Users Group meetings may include:

- Current problems with learning or using a program or system
- System performance problems (response time, system availability, etc.)
- Lessons learned and improved ways of learning or using a program or system
- Requirements for system performance and ease-of-use improvements or training
- Reports from MIS on system improvement efforts and new projects
- Responses from MIS to problems and requirements previously identified by the Users Group

It is important for the MIS Users Group to solicit input from and provide feedback to all MIS users. A newsletter, an internal Web page or a bulletin board can be very useful for this purpose.