American Society for Information Science & Technology

Special Interest Group/ Management of Information Activities

Survey of SIG/MGT Members

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BACKGROUND

SIG/MGT was formed in 1975 under the name SIG/Management of Information Activities[1]. There were two motivations for the organization of this SIG:

- The recognition that there were many members of ASIS who were managers of corporate libraries, who wanted a forum where they could explore their unique, mutual interests;
- The recognition that the library/ information science schools were doing little or nothing to introduce the basic concepts of management science to their students.

SIG/Management of Information Activities then sponsored its first session at ASIS 1976:

Information Needs of Top Management – Tackling the Energy Problem
Irene S. Farkas-Conn/ University of Chicago, Chicago IL (moderator)
- *Top Level Government Planning for Energy R&D*
  Roger W.A. LeCassie/ U.S. Energy Research & Development Administration, Washington DC
- *Allocating Resources for Energy Development in Major Companies*
  Robert H. Riley/ Chase Manhattan Bank, New York NY
- *Information Needed for Project Planning*
  Peter Spitz/ Chem Systems, Inc., New York NY
- *Information for the Citizen – Managing Energy Politics*
  Joseph P. Brennan/ Bituminous Coal Operators Association, Washington DC

This session definitively established SIG/MGT's interest in the management of information activities. If you peruse the sessions that SIG/MGT sponsored over the next 30 years, you see that it continuously acted on its first motivation.

The interest in the management of information activities was further enhanced in 1980 when SIG/CBE (Costs, Budgeting, and Economics) was absorbed into SIG/MGT. SIG/CBE was formed in 1970, and for the next 10 years, it actively sponsored workshops and sessions on these subjects at ASIS Annual Meetings.

As for its second motivation, one of the authors[2] made an interesting discovery in her files. There was a proposal dated January 12, 1982 from James L. Olsen, Jr. (Librarian, National Academy of Sciences/ National Academy of Engineering), to SIG/MGT Past-Chair (1981) Melinda J. Scott (Information Center Manager, Peat Marwick Mitchell & Co.) for a continuing education program involving "clinics" or workshops on areas that are of concern to management of personnel and services". Melinda forwarded his letter to me, as SIG/MGT Chair (1982), and I appointed Jim as Chair of SIG/MGT's Continuing Education [Sub]Committee. Jim and I, together with Chair-Elect (1983) Stephanie L. Normann (Library Director, University of Texas Health Sciences Center) presented a written proposal titled "A Proposal to Initiate Continuing Education Programs on Management" to the SIG Cabinet on October 17, 1982 at ASIS 1982 in Columbus OH. My notes indicate that the proposal was turned over to the ASIS Committee on Information Science Education, but it appears that no direct implementation of the proposal was ever initiated.

Over SIG/MGT's history, three surveys have been performed, as documented in the following table. The primary motivation for these surveys was to understand the extent to which SIG/MGT's charge reflects members' understanding of its scope and purpose.

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[1] By 1983, SIG/Management of Information Activities was being represented in the ASIS Proceedings simply as SIG/MGT, and over time its members forgot that its scope wasn't just *Management* in general, but *Management of Information Activities.*
[2] Deanna Morrow Hall

SIG/MGT Surveys							
	Number of members	% Response		Does SIG/MGT's *current* charge reflect your understanding of SIG/MGT's scope and purpose?	%	Do you still want to participate in SIG/MGT?	%
SIG/MGT Survey 1981	~ 400 (1)	25% (103/400)	YES	94	91%		
			YES with changes	2	2%		
			NO	7	7%		
			TOTAL	103			
SIG/MGT Survey 2011	75	13% (10/75)	YES	7	70%	7	70%
			YES with changes	0		2	20%
			NO	3	30%	1	10%
			TOTAL	10		10	
SIG/MGT Survey 2014				Does SIG/MGT's *revised (2)* charge reflect your understanding of SIG/MGT's scope and purpose?			
	75	36% (27/75)	YES	21	81%		
			NO	5	19%		
			TOTAL	26			
(1) The work affiliations of these 400 members represented many of corporate America's best-known names.							
(2) See Appendix 1 for the comparison of the original charter vs. the revised charter							

The following observations may be made about these surveys:
- The number of members has declined by 81% (from ~400 in 1981 to ~75 in 2011-2014)
- The percent response declined from 25% in 1981 to 13% in 2011, but increased to a robust 36% in 2014.
- Agreement with SIG/MGT's *current* charge declined from 91% in 1981 to 70% in 2011.
- Disagreement with SIG/MGT's *current* charge increased from 9% in 1981 to 30% in 2011.
- Agreement with SIG/MGT's *revised* charge in 2014 is 81%.
  =Of the 5 respondents who disagreed with the revised charge, three did not provide any explanation for their disagreement, and did not provide any contact information for further discussion.
  =Of the 2 respondents who disagreed with the revised charge AND who provided an explanation for their disagreement, one did not provide any contact information for further discussion.

The table on the following page provides a numerical analysis of the 2014 survey responses.

Survey of SIG/MGT Members

	Location	Type of work affiliation	Q1/ Does SIG/MGT's name reflect your understanding of SIG/MGT's scope and purpose?	Q2/ Does the structured and edited version of SIG/MGT's current charter reflect your understanding of SIG/MGT's scope and purpose?	Q3/ How does affiliation with SIG/MGT represent and/or enhance your work?*	Q4/ Do you have a suggestion for the design of a logo for SIG/MGT?	Q5/ Your name (optional)	Q6/ Your work affiliation (optional)	Q7/Your email address (in case we want to discuss your response) (optional)
Respondent ANSWERED this question >>			24	26	21	15	14	15	12
% answered (based on 27 respondents)			89%	96%	78%	56%	52%	56%	44%
Respondent answered YES			17	21	14	6			
% answered YES			71%	81%	67%	40%			
Respondent answered YES with comments			0	1	POSITIVE 16				
Respondent answered NO			7	5	7	9			
% answered NO			29%	19%	33%	60%			
Respondent answered NO with comments			2	2	NEGATIVE/ NEUTRAL 5	4			

Location/ NO response	16	
Location/ USA	9	
Location/ Other		Canada (1) Finland (1)
Work affiliation/ NO response		15
Work affiliation/ academic		9
Work affiliation/ corporate		4
Work affiliation/ government		1

*This question required a narrative response, of which 16 were positive; 5 were negative or neutral.

OBSERVATIONS
Q1/ Does SIG/MGT's name reflect your understanding of SIG/MGT's scope and purpose?
- 24 (89%) of the respondents answered this question, of which 17 (71%) said YES, and 7 (29%) said NO (2 included comments).

Q2/ Does the structured and edited version of SIG/MGT's current charter reflect your understanding of SIG/MGT's scope and purpose?
- 26 (96%) of the respondents answered this question, of which 21 (81%) said YES, and 5 (19%) said NO (2 included comments).

Q3/ How does affiliation with SIG/MGT represent and/or enhance your work? *[This question required a narrative response]*
- 21 (78%) of the respondents answered this question, of which 14 (67%) responded POSITIVELY, 7 (33%) responded NEGATIVELY/NEUTRALLY.

Q4/ Do you have a suggestion for the design of a logo for SIG/MGT?
- 15 (56%) of the respondents answered this question, of which 6 (40%) responded POSITIVELY, 9 (60%) responded NEGATIVELY, i.e. no suggestions.

CONCLUSIONS
Q1/ Does SIG/MGT's name reflect your understanding of SIG/MGT's scope and purpose?
- Inferring from the 2 NO comments to this question, the 7 NO responses are at least partially explained by the fact that SIG/MGT members have forgotten, or in many cases never knew, that MGT didn't stand for *Management* alone, but for *Management of Information Activities*. This name was intended to encompass all the professional information management activities in which all types of organizations (academic, corporate, government) engage:
  - Archives
  - Information technology
  - Knowledge management
  - Libraries
  - Records management

Q2/ Does the structured and edited version of SIG/MGT's current charter reflect your understanding of SIG/MGT's scope and purpose?
- Some of the negative responses to this question can be accounted for by the fact that Survey Monkey prevented a structured presentation of the revised charter. The presentation in Appendix 1 of this report makes its structure evident, and hopefully more understandable.

Q3/ How does affiliation with SIG/MGT represent and/or enhance your work? *[This question required a narrative response]*
- Of the 14 positive comments, 2 specifically used the term *networking*, and 6 more used terminology that could be construed as *networking*. Thus, networking is perceived as a significant benefit of SIG/MGT.

Q4/ Do you have a suggestion for the design of a logo for SIG/MGT?
- Of these 6 positive suggestions, 3 have circles as recurring visual elements. Also, there are recurring words: information (3); money (1); people (3); technology (2) plus "key phrases", implying the 4 previous words.

RECOMMENDATIONS
Q1/ Does SIG/MGT's name reflect your understanding of SIG/MGT's scope and purpose?
- In order to clarify the scope and purpose of SIG/Management of Information Activities, we recommend that the acronym be changed from MGT to MIA. This change will be a constant reminder that the scope of the SIG doesn't stand for *Management* alone, but for *Management of Information Activities*.

Q2/ Does the structured and edited version of SIG/MGT's current charter reflect your understanding of SIG/MGT's scope and purpose?
- Given that 81% of the respondents agreed with the structured and edited version of the SIG's current charter, we recommend that the revised version be accepted. We believe that the objections of the 19% of respondents who disagreed can be satisfied by one-on-one discussion.

Q3/ How does affiliation with SIG/MGT represent and/or enhance your work? *[This question required a narrative response]*
- While networking is perceived as a significant benefit of this SIG, it appears that there may be unexpressed needs that need to be elicited, in order for this SIG to maximize its benefit to its members. One way to elicit these needs is for the members to suggest session topics for the annual meetings.

Q4/ Do you have a suggestion for the design of a logo for SIG/MGT?
- Based on the ideas suggested in the survey, we invite members to submit draft logos which can then be voted on by the members at large.

Collaboration with related organizations
The scope of SIG/MIA involves a top-down view of all information management functions within all types of organizations. This sets it apart from all the other associations with which we are familiar, e.g. the Society of American Archivists, Special Libraries Association, etc., which address individual information management functions within organizations.

However, there are two associations (AIIM and IRMA identified below) both of which claim territory that SIG/MIA has historically claimed. However, the difference is that they are stand-alone associations, whereas SIG/MIA is a subdivision of the larger scope of ASIS&T, which is a major part of its appeal. In other words, we suspect that no SIG/MIA member would give up membership in SIG/MIA for membership in one or the other of these associations, but would appreciate an ongoing collaboration with these associations.

- **Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM)**
  "Our mission is to improve **organizational performance** by empowering a community of leaders committed to information-driven innovation."
  AIIM is engaged, at a very practical level, e.g. standards development, in achieving its mission. This level of practicality does not seem to reflect the more philosophical interests of the typical SIG/MIA member. Nevertheless, the typical SIG/MIA member wants, and needs, to be aware of these practical developments, in order to selectively apply them in their own employing organization. Therefore, we recommend that:
  - Any SIG/MIA member who is currently also a member of AIIM, self-identify to Bill Edgar (BillEdgar@MissouriState.edu) for discussion as to how that member may serve as liaison to AIIM;
  - Communication be established with AIIM, and that AIIM be invited to participate in a SIG/MIA session at ASIS&T 2015 for the purpose of identifying how the two groups may collaborate to their mutual advantage.

- **Information Resources Management Association (IRMA)**
  "Advancing the Concepts & Practices of Information Resources Management in Modern Organizations"
  IRMA's tag line above claims much of the territory that SIG/MIA has claimed, but IRMA heretofore has had no visibility within SIG/MIA. The IRMA website does not provide all the info that one would want to know about IRMA, so a phone call elicited the following details:
  - It doesn't have elected officers like an ordinary association; Mehdi Khosrow-Pour, D.B.A. is "permanent president";
  - It has more than 100 members.
  In particular, observe that Khosrow-Pour is editor of the new (third) edition of the *Encyclopedia of Information Science and Technology*, and it is published by IGI Global, which apparently is where Khosrow-Pour is employed. Marcia Bates is one of the contributors to the *Encyclopedia*, and undoubtedly other ASIS&T members are too, so IRMA and IGI are known to at least a small number of ASIS&T members. Therefore, we recommend that:
  - Any SIG/MIA member who is currently also a member of IRMA, self-identify to Bill Edgar (BillEdgar@MissouriState.edu) for discussion as to how that member may serve as liaison to IRMA;
  - Communication be established with IRMA, and that IRMA be invited to participate in a SIG/MIA session at ASIS&T 2015 for the purpose of identifying how the two groups may collaborate to their mutual advantage.

- **Issue a Request for Proposal to the i-Schools for establishment of a Center/Institute for the Study of Organizational Information Management**
  Those who are employed in information management functions within organizations regularly see the chaos and lost productivity that result from:
  - the lack of coordination, even predatory behavior, among the various information management functions, or worse –-
  - the *absence* of professional management of the organization's proprietary information (archives and records management) or published information (libraries) coupled with --
  - the belief that the IT department understands the management of these functions, and can do so through standard IT software.

Consequently, the need for organizations to understand the role of **professional** management of **all** their various types of information is overwhelming; yet no research organization has emerged that is capable of performing the research, and bringing together the existing literature, to create an integrated vision of organizational information management. However, we believe that the i-Schools, possibly in conjunction with the school of management at their respective institutions, are capable of performing this function. In particular, the [Masters in Information Management (MIM) at the University of Maryland](), already seems to have recognized the need for an integrated approach to organizational information management.

As an example of the work that the proposed center/institute might do, consider the following. As noted earlier in this report, SIG/CBE was active from 1970-1980. During this time, it did significant work on bringing the economics of information to the attention of ASIS through its sessions at annual meetings, and other publications. Also, there was significant publication on the economics of information outside of ASIS. For example, consider the following reference:

> Mason, Robert M.: A lower bound cost benefit model for information services.
> *Information Processing & Management.* 1978, vol. 14, issue 2, pp. 71-83
> Describes an economic modeling approach to evaluating the costs and benefits associated with providing information services through information centers.

This reference was found by searching the EBSCO-hosted database LISTA (Library & Information Science & Technology Abstracts). Searching Google Scholar, it was found that this reference has been cited 28 times, but it has never achieved any recognition within the organizational library community as a model for calculating cost-benefit. This reference is an example of the scatter of the literature on organizational information management, which has greatly hindered the development and propagation of the concept. The proposed center/institute could contribute enormously to this concept, and to the improved productivity of all organizations.

APPENDIX/ 1/ SIG/ Management (MGT) of Information Activities
Comparison of original and revised charters

Original charter

SIG/MGT serves those who manage information in technical or generalist environments and those who seek to increase their effectiveness at one or more stages of the information process spectrum (creation to dissemination).

It provides a forum for study and discussion of:
confluence and integration of information technologies;
managing financial and human resources;
economics of the unit and the enterprise;
cost-benefit analysis applications to information activities;
designing optimum training and professional development strategies for information professionals;
and enhancing organizational and individual productivity through effective information management.

NOTE: In the revised charter, the above elements have been reorganized under the headings of:
- *Human resources management*
- *Technologies*
- *Economics and finance*

Revised charter [New text is boldfaced]

SIG/MGT ~~serves~~ **provides a forum for** ~~those~~ **information professionals** who manage information **resources for professional employees** in ~~technical or generalist environments~~ **academic, corporate, or government** environments **for the purposes of:**
~~and those who seek to~~
- increas~~e~~**ing** their effectiveness at one or more stages of the information process spectrum (creation ~~to~~ **through** dissemination **to the end user**).
- **enhancing organizational and individual productivity through effective information resources management.**

It provides a forum for study and discussion of:
- Human resources management
  - designing optimum training and professional development strategies for information professionals;
- Technologies
  - ~~confluence~~ **convergence** and integration of information technologies;
- Economics and finance
  - Cost-benefit analysis of information activities;
  - Economics of the unit and the enterprise