

## *Checking Out the Information System*

A while ago, I participated in a very academic e-mail discussion trying to define what an information system is. One person said “[...] an Information System is much more than the Information Technology that enables it. Often we focus too narrowly on the Information Technology component at the expense of understanding the other vital ingredients necessary for an effective Information System.”

Couldn't have said it better myself. In fact, it reminded me of this story:

A CEO from a hotel chain found himself having to spend a night in a hotel from a competitor. Naturally, he was very curious as to what kind of information systems they had, and resolved to keep an open eye for competitive use of IT. As he approached the reception for first time, the woman behind it smiled at him and said "Welcome back, Sir!"

Flabbergasted, he said "But...it is 12 years since I was here last! How could you know that I have stayed here before, what kind of advanced information systems do you have that can store and find the fact that I was here 12 years ago?"

"Well, it is really very simple", she said. "When the doorman opened the door to your cab, he asked if this was your first stay with us. You answered no, and as you walked through the door, the doorman looked at me through the window and touched his nose. That told me that you should be welcomed back...."

Moral of the story: Information systems don't have to mean information technology....

Wanna rethink that huge CRM software implementation?

Happy check-in,

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