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Information Systems Success in Small and Medium Enterprises: an evaluation by Australian public accountants

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Abstract

Traditionally, the success of Information Systems (IS) has been studied in the context of large organisations with a focus on systems that have been developed inhouse. Most businesses, however, are small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and they have increasingly adopted packaged application software. To evaluate their success we examined two research variables, namely user practices and design features. The evaluation was done by public accountants who deal with SMEs as clients and are most likely to have well-developed opinions on the use of packaged software. In general, they rated small/medium accounting software packages as satisfactory with some notable exceptions. The installation phase of packages is not very well managed. Packages appear to lack a number of important control features which, considering the lack of internal IS expertise in SMEs, could result in malfunctions of their accounting systems. The study identifies better documentation and user education as ways to overcome perceived deficiencies.

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