

ABSTRACT

The Internet has become an increasingly vital tool in our information society. Its phenomenal growth has made it a virtual house hold word, whether or not one knows anything specific about it. The infiltration of internet usage into almost every corner of the world has been responsible for the new world information order, free of social, economical, cultural and geographical limits. The speed of internet growth is so fast that people can see the effects on their daily lives.

Companies, individuals, and institutions use the Internet in many ways. Companies use the Internet for electronic commerce, also called e-commerce, including advertising, selling, buying, distributing products, and providing customer service. Businesses and institutions use the Internet for voice and video conferencing and other forms of communication. Media and entertainment companies run online news and weather services over the Internet, distribute music and movies, and actually broadcast audio and video, including live radio and television programs. Online chat allows people to carry on discussions using written text. Instant messaging enables people to exchange text messages; share digital photo, video, and audio files; and play games in real time. Scientists and scholars use the Internet to communicate with colleagues, perform research, distribute lecture notes and course materials to students, and publish papers and articles.

The literature survey revealed the world wide usage of the Internet and internet based concepts. 21st century warfare is all based on information superiority. Militaries around the globe are now planning their future around concepts of network centric warfare and revolution in military affairs.

Potential of internet usage for administrative and operational functions in the navy are enormous. Procurement, training and development, media, health, operations, are few major areas for internet usage in the Sri Lanka Navy (SLN). Proper usage of the Internet in these domains will result enhanced organizational efficiency and better productivity.

A field study was carried out by the researcher through a combination of questionnaires, interviews, discussions, informal talks and participant observations. The study revealed that internet usage in the SLN is far below from any desired level. The researcher identified several major causes for low internet usage in the SLN. Lack of infrastructure (computers, connections, knowledge and skills etc.), low computer literacy, difficulties accessing the Internet, slow data transfer rate, lack of awareness, lack of English knowledge, lack of free time, not proper focus by corporate management are among major causes for low internet usage for organizational matters in the SLN.

The study recommends several short term and long term strategies to overcome this unhealthy situation and to enhance organizational efficiency and effectiveness in the SLN through optimal use of the Internet. Infrastructure development, human resource development, application development, departmental training, awareness campaign, imparting English knowledge, harnessing corporate management commitment are major areas of concern to boost up internet usage in the SLN.

The researcher firmly believes that implementing an IT and internet strategy for SLN is not a difficult task. With the industry support and in-house training, this is pretty much a goal that could be achieved realistically. However, the challenge lies in changing the perception and the attitude of the individuals to adapt to this exciting technology in the day to day work in the SLN.

The researcher is in the opinion that proper implementation of the study recommendations will take SLN to greater heights of internet usage. And optimal internet usage will result enhanced organizational efficiency, effectiveness and better productivity in the Sri Lanka Navy.