Software

Application Software Used in Industry

Word processors and spreadsheets are widely used in schools. These packages are also used extensively in industry but there is scope for other application software too. Commonly used in industry are database management, presentation, authoring, desktop publishing and speech recognition software packages.

Lesson Outcomes

By the end of the lesson, you should be able to:
- Discuss where different types of application software packages are used in the real world;
- Explain the purpose and common uses of these software packages.

Curriculum Links

This task supports the assessment of:
LO 1: Hardware and System Software
- Identify and distinguish between computer types and associated software.
- Distinguish between system software and application software (including user-developed and development software).
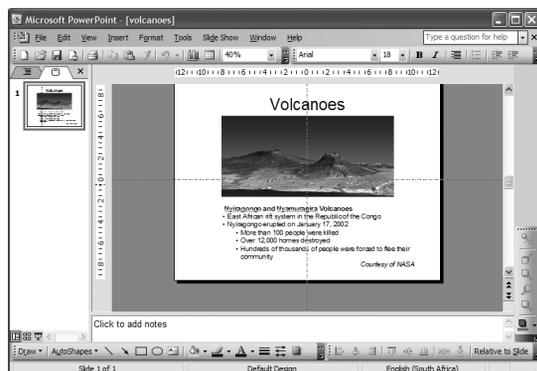
Lesson Notes

Database management software

A database is a collection of information on a particular subject or relating to a particular purpose. Database management software helps to store this data in an organised fashion and improves the efficiency of retrieving data. Database software is commonly used in organisations that have large amounts of related data such as insurance companies, libraries and banks. Examples of this software are Microsoft Access, Visual FoxPro and Paradox.

Presentation software

To effectively present information to an audience, a speaker needs visual aids.

Presentation software can help you put together an exciting and visually powerful presentation. Business and educational environments rely heavily on presentation software for effective communication. Examples are Microsoft PowerPoint and Visual Communicator.

Authoring software

In many businesses today you need a website to make your business accessible to the public. You have to make sure that this website creates a good impression by being professionally designed. Authoring software is used to design and manage websites. Examples of this type of software are Microsoft FrontPage, Flash, HotDog Professional and Dreamweaver.

Desktop publishing software

In the previous lesson we leant that word processors help us produce documents that have been formatted and edited, and into which graphic material has been inserted if necessary. Although these documents are well laid out, they are not really suitable for publishing and desktop publishing (DTP) software is necessary to get a more graphic appearance. DTP uses a computer system and printer to perform many of the functions of a print shop. Using DTP software you can produce books, magazines and brochures – in fact anything that needs to look good. To be a successful DTP user you need creativity, attention to detail and very good computer skills. Examples of this type of software are Adobe PageMaker, QuarkXpress and Corel Ventura.

Lesson Notes continued...

Speech recognition software
This type of software recognises the spoken word. The keyboard is replaced with a microphone so that input is in the form of speech. [The software converts the speech into patterns which are then input into a word processor in the same way that typing is. Speech is therefore converted into text. In the same way, text can be converted in speech. This software is vitally important for physically disabled people especially people who are blind or cannot use their hands. The programs are customised for each user because everyone's voice is unique. Examples of this software are IBM Via Voice and Dragon NaturallySpeaking.

❓ Task

1. Draw up a table showing the differences between a spreadsheet package and a database package.
2. Find out from your teacher if your school has a web page and what package was used to create the web page. Do some research on the advantages and disadvantages of using that package.

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