

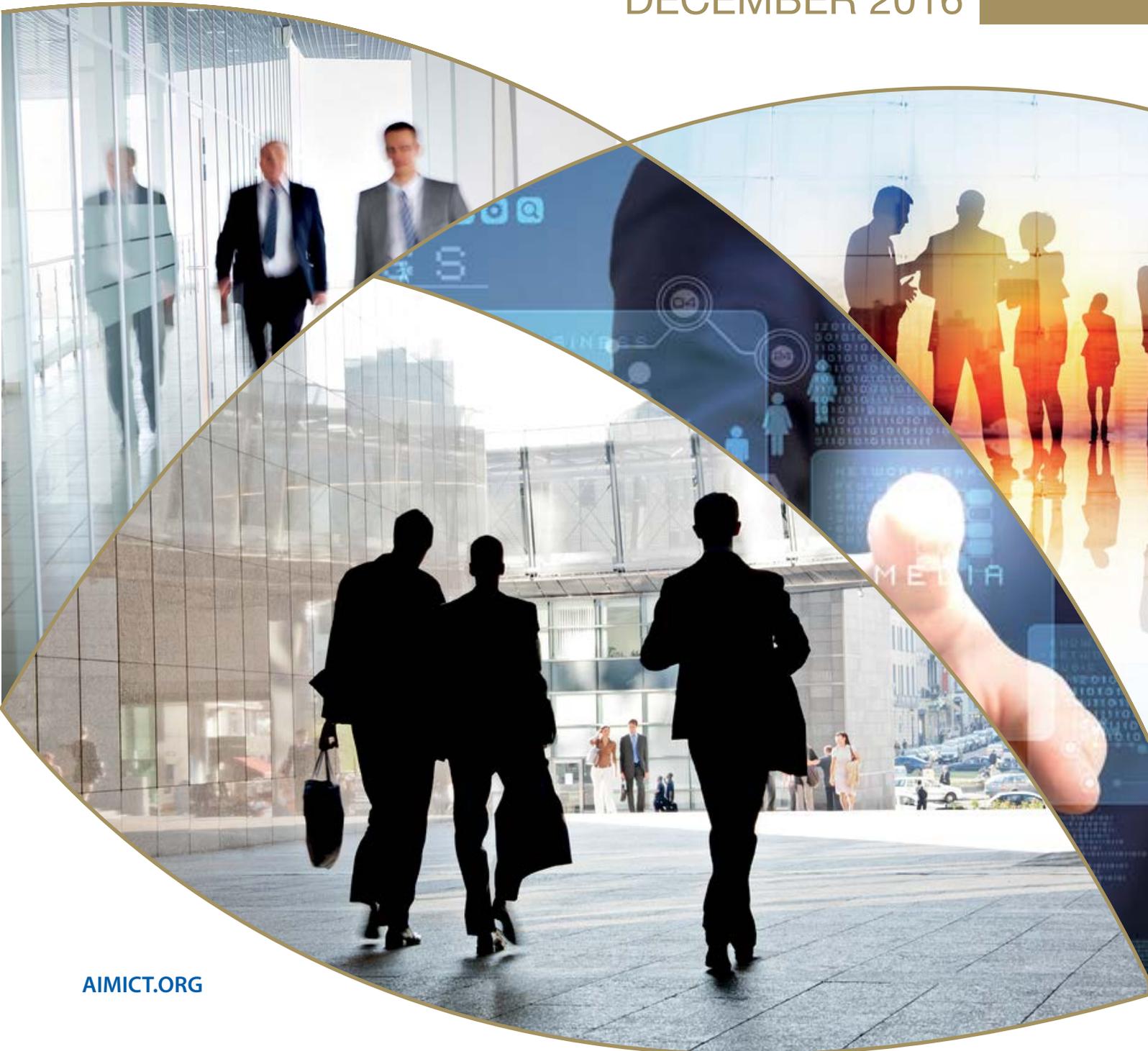
المجمع العربي الدولي لتكنولوجيا الإدارة
The Arab International Society for Management Technology (AIMICT)
Member of TAG-Foundation

عضو في طلال أبوغزاله فاؤنڊيشن



AIMICT NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2016



IN THIS ISSUE

- **AIMICT Launches Training Plan for the First Half of 2017**
- **AIMICT Conducts Time Management Training Course**
- **AIMICT Releases Results of PQM Exam**
- **14 Email Marketing Mistakes to Avoid**
- **Just What is a Smart City?**

AIMICT LAUNCHES TRAINING PLAN FOR THE FIRST HALF OF 2017

AMMAN - With the objective to fulfill the Society's mission in qualifying individuals to compete with today's social and economic development challenges in the field of Information Technology and Management, the Arab International Society for Technology Management (AIMICT) launched its training plan for the first half of 2017. The plan includes courses, programs and professional certificates that keep pace with the professional requirements in the ICT field.



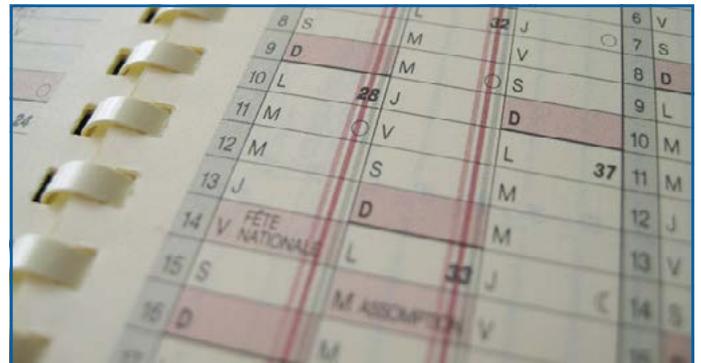
This plan includes programs and professional certificates accredited by the British Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM), in addition to several specialized training courses in the areas of Project Management, Logistics, Marketing and Secretariat.

For further information, please visit the website of the Society through the following link:

www.aimict.org

AIMICT CONDUCTS TIME MANAGEMENT TRAINING COURSE

AMMAN - The Arab International Society for Management Technology (AIMICT) conducted a training course on "Time Management" for a group of participants on December 11-15, 2016. The program aimed at enabling participants to recognize time management and stress at work strategies and to efficiently use them in a manner that positively reflects on achieving corporate and personal goals alike.



This would be accomplished by enhancing participants' positive approaches toward time which is considered one of the most important resources, explaining reasons for losing control on it, and indicating the resulting effects consequently in a way that contributes to the enhancement of the overall performance of the organization and the achievement of goals efficiently and competently.

AIMICT RELEASES RESULTS OF PQM EXAM



The Arab International Society for Management Technology (AIMICT) released results of PQM exam conducted for a group of participants from different sectors in Jordan mainly in the cities of Amman and Ma'an, and in the UAE in Sharjah, and Ras Al Khaimah and in Syria in Damascus.

14 EMAIL MARKETING MISTAKES TO AVOID

Despite the rise of social media and texting, email marketing is still an effective way to reach prospective and existing customers. But if you want your email to stand out in the inbox, and not wind up in the trash, avoid making these 14 email marketing mistakes.

Mistake No. 1: Not optimizing your emails for different platforms and mobile devices.

"Outlook, Gmail, Yahoo, etc., all display emails slightly differently, and all look different on desktop vs. mobile," notes Nate Kristy, vice president, marketing, Automational. "Do you know how your email template will respond to the variety of devices and browsers with which it could be opened? Most marketing automation tools will allow you to preview your message on different sized screens and make sure everything appears as intended. [Just] be sure you are using this feature. You should also send test emails to a variety of email addresses, and check each from different devices, to ensure the email appears just as you want it to."

"The best way to ensure your email gets dumped in the trash once it is opened is to frustrate the reader with an email that doesn't render correctly on their mobile device," says Paige Musto, senior director, corporate communications, Act-On Software. "Now that more than half of all email messages are opened on mobile devices, it is paramount that marketers create responsively designed emails so that they display beautifully across any device the recipient might open the email with. A way to future-proof this fail from happening is to use an email service or marketing automation provider that has responsive design technology built in."

Mistake No. 2: Not using segmentation and personalization.

"It's a mistake to send a blanket email to all of your customers," says Allen Bonde, senior vice president, marketing, Placester. "At the same time, it would be a mistake (and impossible) to tailor email to every single customer. The better practice [is] to segment your customer base by who they are: a hot or cold lead, a past or present prospect, their position in your sales funnel, their specific interests, [where they are,] etc.," he explains.

"Armed with this segmentation, small businesses can then use their email marketing software to send relevant messages to each group at appropriate times, increasing the likelihood that customers are interested in the call to action."

"Even segmenting your list by industry or including a first name in the subject line can have a tremendous impact on conversions," adds Justine Beauregard, owner & founder, Mirelle Marketing. "It's worth the time to drill down and personalize when possible!"

Mistake No. 3: Focusing only on promotion.

Instead of using email marketing exclusively as a sales tool, "use it as a medium to engage your customers and build customer loyalty," says Doug Sechrist, vice president, demand marketing, Infusionsoft. "Of course, your ultimate goal is to promote and sell your product. But to see better results from your email marketing program, focus on engaging your customers [with helpful or useful information, not necessarily involving your products or service] instead of bombarding them with promotional content. In the end, engaged subscribers are much more likely to open emails they receive from your brand."



Mistake No. 4: Having a confusing, deceptive or boring subject line.

The subject line “is the first thing that we see in our email inbox,” notes Kate Chan, full stack marketer, Rabbut. It’s also “what makes people want to click on your email or not.” That’s why it’s important to spend some time crafting a subject line that will really grab your readers’ attention. Better yet, test different subject lines to see which one works best.

“Subject lines can make or break your open rate,” says Gil Resnick, marketing automation specialist, Replibly. “A good, catchy subject line will draw a reader in for more and get them into the email itself. Boring subject lines often result in clients deleting the email or simply skipping over it to get to more important things. Give [your] subject lines some jazz, but keep them on topic. Overuse of exclamation points and even certain words, such as ‘free’ or ‘money,’ can trigger the spam filter, meaning your email never had a chance.”

Also be careful about being too catchy. “While catchy subject lines are good at grabbing your recipient’s attention and increasing your open rates, they’ll only work if the email [delivers] what [has] been promised,” says Sechrist. “Nobody likes to feel deceived. [So] it’s imperative not to over sensationalize your subject lines and instead align the subject with the content.”

Also, keep in mind that “clear subject lines receive 541 percent more clicks than clever ones, according to a study by AWeber Communications,” says Mike Madden, demand generation program manager, Marketo. And by clear, he means subject lines “avoid tricks, clickbait and questions about what the email actually contains [and] are consistent with the body of the email.”

Mistake No. 5: Embedding your message in an image.

“Avoid putting all your text into images,” says Sam Binks, digital marketing manager, TeamSnap. “If there’s an issue and images don’t load for some reason, guess what? Your text doesn’t either. What a waste.” The solution: “Balance images (don’t make them huge) with clear and concise text in the body of the email. That way text will always be readable and your message gets through.”

Mistake No.6: Having too much text.

"These days, an email is only open for a matter of seconds, leaving your subscribers enough time to scan [it] for visually enticing photos and read about 50 words (max)," says Chiara McPhee, founder & COO, Bizzy. "This means you have only moments to catch your reader's attention. If you fail to convince your audience to take action and buy your product during this time, your conversion rates will not increase substantially."

To help ensure your message is read, "shorten your text to make your message more concise and include amazing photography to entice your reader," she suggests. "It's important to make a lasting impression once you've gained that initial email-opening click. But remember, you only have 20 seconds to make that impression and create a subscriber into a customer."

Mistake No. 7: Looking unprofessional.

"Nothing looks more unprofessional than getting a bcc email that clearly went out to a business owner's entire address book," says John-Henry Scherck, growth marketing manager, DocSend. "Use an actual email marketing platform, like MailChimp, AWeber, ActiveCampaign, Constant Contact or the dozens of other options on the market. These platforms are specifically tailored for email marketing and can provide business owners with helpful features like pre-designed templates, scheduling, tracking and analytics that regular email just doesn't offer."

Mistake No. 8: Not having a call-to-action button.

"The point of an email, after all, is to get the user to go somewhere else, be it opening a product page, scheduling a time to speak or booking an appointment," says Resnick. "Whether your email is quick and to the point or a bit more descriptive and lengthy, a call-to-action button will stand out and allow the reader to easily navigate to what's important to them (and you) without reading every single word."

Mistake No. 9: Not proofreading/double checking links.

"There is nothing worse than sending out a newsletter and seeing that the subject line has a grammatical [or spelling] error, or finding out that you [included] the wrong hyperlink," says Danny Garcia, marketing operations manager, Stacklist. So before hitting 'send,' "double check [your] newsletter or, [better yet,] have someone else look it over for you."

Mistake No. 10: Sending email too frequently/infrequently.

"Most businesses make the mistake of sending too much email to consumers," says Matthew Bretzius, president, FischTank PR. But the opposite – sending email too infrequently – is also a mistake. "Email marketing is still one of the most powerful tools available, but you've got to find the right rhythm. Sending out multiple emails a day is likely too much, whereas sending one out a month might not be enough," he notes. "Keep an eye on your open and click rates, as well as your unsubscribes. This will help you determine the [right] frequency."

"While sending more emails does not always translate to increased sales, under-mailing can also cause conversion rates to suffer," says Sechrist. "Therefore, the best way to decide the optimal number of emails to send is through A/B tests. You may find that different segments prefer emails at a different frequency. In that case, you can tailor your send volume for each segment accordingly. Another best practice to consider is giving your subscribers an option to pick [how often] they would like to hear from you."

Mistake No. 11: Having a bad (or no) email sign-up page and/or unsubscribe process.

“So many businesses (small and large) don’t have an email sign-up page or collection method,” says Jenn Barber, founder, Jenn Barber Marketing. “The people on their ‘list’ come from the Contact Us form or from business cards collected from events. This is so bad. As soon as companies decide to start emailing people, they need to have a collection method – [and] it needs to clearly communicate expectations [and your privacy policy] to the people signing up. There [also] needs to be a way for people to unsubscribe.”

“If your email does not have a clear unsubscribe link, the subscriber may mark the email as spam instead of simply unsubscribing,” says Alice Williams, communications specialist, Frontier Business Edge. “This can negatively affect [your] reputation.”

Mistake No. 12: Emailing people who have not given you permission to do so.

“The last thing you want to do as an email marketer is violate email sending practices that might wind you up on the SPAM list or, more seriously, [in trouble] with the law, specifically Canada’s Anti-Spam Law (CASL) and EU Privacy laws,” says Musto. So before you send out your next email campaign, “make sure your marketing team is aware of [any] laws they need to abide by, to ensure your company doesn’t fall victim to this email fail.”

Mistake No.13: Not tracking results – or email ROI.

“Tracking campaign performance through metrics like open rates and click-through rates can help you tweak, refine and improve your [email marketing],” says Mychelle Mollot, CMO, Klipfolio. “The more opens and clicks, the more that specific campaign and content resonated with your subscribers.”

Similarly, “you need to make sure your efforts are paying off—with new leads, new customers and, ultimately, an increase in revenue for your business,” she says. “The most important email marketing metric to track is your email ROI, something that many smaller businesses neglect doing. To track ROI, look at how many conversions have been generated as a result of email marketing campaigns. These conversions may happen on online, in-store or directly through email. Monitoring email ROI will help you determine overall success and help you continuously improve campaign performance.”

Mistake No. 14: Poor email list hygiene.

“Like brushing your teeth, email list hygiene comes down to cleaning and maintaining everything that goes into your database,” explains Madden. “While this takes time and attention, it’s still an important and necessary step for smaller businesses. With the proper hygiene practices in place, you can clean up your database over time to maintain a healthy email list, which means better results.”

Madden’s tips for properly maintaining email lists:

- » Weed out soft-bounced emails.
- » Remove emails not associated with a person (@info, etc).
- » Run a re-engagement campaign to target users who haven’t been active in six months or more to determine who still wants to hear from you.

Source: www.itnews.com/article

JUST WHAT IS A SMART CITY?

What's a "smart city"?

It's a fair question, but a hard one to answer.

Many larger municipalities have embraced the "smart city" concept in recent years, but definitions of the term -- and examples of the ways technology is being used to make cities "smart" -- run the gamut. Mayors and city CIOs usually talk about using sensors to, say, wirelessly manage streetlights and traffic signals to lower energy costs, and they can provide specific returns on investment for such initiatives -- x millions of dollars saved over y amount of time, for example.

Other examples include using sensors to monitor water mains for leaks (and thereby reduce repair costs), or to monitor air quality for high pollution levels (which would yield information that would help people with asthma plan their days). Police can use video sensors to manage crowds or spot crimes. Or sensors might determine that a parking lot is full, and then trigger variable-message street signs to direct drivers to other lots.

Smart cities as places for fun

Those are some of the countless practical examples. But smart cities can also be fun. In Bristol, England, a custom-built infrared sensor system was added to street lamps for a few weeks in late 2014 to record the shadows of pedestrians walking by. The shadows were then projected back through the streetlights for others walking by later to see.

Called "Shadowing" and developed by Jonathan Chomko and Matthew Rosier, the initiative was intended as a public art installation. A winner of a Playable City Award, "Shadowing" helps illustrate how broad and elusive the definition of "smart city" has become.



That's a good thing.

"A smart city shouldn't just save money, but should also be attractive and fun to live in," said Carl Piva, vice president of strategic programs at TM Forum, a global nonprofit association with 950 member organizations whose aim is to guide research into digital business transformation, including smart city initiatives.

"Being a smart city is more than being efficient and involves turning it around to make it fun," Piva said.

The Bristol “Shadowing” project was discussed at a recent forum in Yinchuan, China, attended by politicians and technology experts from around the world, Piva said. It was introduced by Paul Wilson, managing director of Bristol Is Open, a joint venture of the Bristol City Council and the University of Bristol that’s devoted to creating an “open, programmable city region” made possible by fast telecom networks and the latest software and hardware.

“Many smart city projects don’t have immediate ROI attached,” Piva said. “My personal reflection is that technology of the future will become more and more invisible to individuals, and the best success criteria will be people not really even noticing the technology. For the time being, that means seeing a lot of technology trying to talk to us or engage with us in various ways. Every city mayor and everybody running for election is now invested in making his city smart. You sort of need to attract businesses and want to attract individuals with talent and make it a prosperous place, to make it livable and workable.”

Piva admitted that “smart city” is a broad concept and a lot to take in, especially for average taxpayers who must foot the bill for smart city projects. “It’s a topic very high up on everybody’s mind, and it’s a question of which pathway you use to get there,” he said. “Different leaders focus in different directions.”

Piva said he has noticed that some cities want to focus on building technology communities, which seems to be a significant part of what Kansas City, Mo., is doing with an innovation corridor coming to an area with a new 2.2-mile streetcar line.

Other cities, especially in Brazil, are using technology to focus on fostering tourism, Piva said. “The common element of smart cities is the citizen and the need to have citizens involved and feel at home,” he explained.

Over and over, city officials talk about the smart city as needing to provide “citizen engagement.”

China’s focus on smart cities

China, which has multiple cities with more than 10 million residents each, has pushed forward with a variety of smart technologies, some that might rankle Americans because of the potential privacy risks they raise.

Piva said there are nearly 300 pilot smart city projects going on in a group of municipalities in the middle of the vast nation. “If you jump on a bus, you may encounter facial recognition, which will be used to determine whether you have a bus permit,” he said.

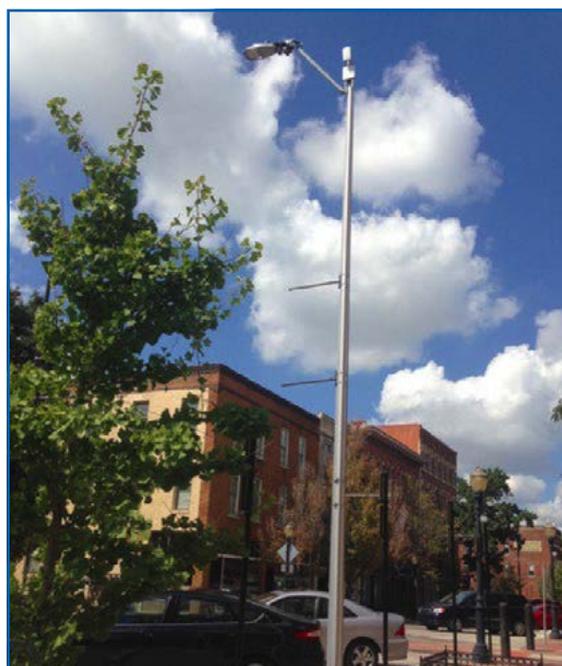
The city of Yinchuan has reduced the size of its permitting work force from 600 employees to 50 by using a common online process accessible to citizens who need anything from a house-building permit to a driver’s license, Piva said.

While Yinchuan’s payback on new permitting technology is easy to determine, “a lot of these ROIs are really hard to calculate,” Piva admitted.

A stark contrast to Yinchuan’s smart city initiative, which has a concrete monetary ROI, is in Dubai. Officials in that United Arab Emirates city are building a “happiness meter,” which will collect digital

inputs from ordinary citizens on their reactions to various things. It could be used to evaluate the combined impact of the cleanliness of streets and the effectiveness of security checkpoints with an assortment of other measures. In some cities, citizen inputs regarding happiness may come from smartphones. But they also could come from digital polling stations. For example, users of airport bathrooms might click a happy face button at a kiosk if they thought the bathrooms were clean.

The theory behind happiness meters is that, if municipal officials can capture data from citizens about what it's like to live in a city, "people will be more successful and take care of the community better," Piva said. However, he acknowledged, "it's a hard ROI to measure and takes lots of different touchpoints."



A working definition of smart city

Ask just about any city official or technologist working for a city, and you are likely to get many different examples of a smart city. A strict definition is even harder to nail down.

Jack Gold, an analyst at J. Gold Associates, took a stab at a comprehensive definition but only after first jabbing at the broad ways the concept is used. "'Smart city' is one of those all-encompassing terms that everyone defines however they want," he said.

But then, he added, "Really, a smart city is about having sensor data that then gets used to create actions. You can define a smart city as a city with better managed infrastructure that is variable, based on input of data and adjustments of the results to best utilize resources or improve safety."

Piva and others might add that a city could use the data to improve the happiness of its visitors, residents and workers.

Gold added, "The ultimate goals of smart cities are power management, reducing pollution footprints, increasing public safety, or offering improved services to residents. The downside is that it takes investment infrastructure, and most cities don't have a lot of extra dollars to invest. But it's coming in small steps in many places."

Source: www.itnews.com/article



For more information

The Arab International Society for Management Technology

Majd Farahat - Executive Director

Tel: (0962-6) 5100900- 1315

Fax: (0962-6) 5100901

info@aimict.org

AIMICT.org

This newsletter is published by:

The Arab International Society for Management Technology

©AIMICT 2016

Reproduction is permitted provided

That the source is acknowledged