

TOP MANAGEMENT'S BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS INFORMATION IN CROATIA

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Dynamic changes in the local and broader environment of Croatian companies require quick and timely reactions from top managers in order to adapting to new and unexpected situations. Appropriate actions and reactions greatly depend on them having at their disposal quality business information and the fact that they need to know how to use them in the processes of independent decision-making.

The behaviour of top managers towards business information in the strategic decision-making processes depends on a whole series of personal and instrumentalised variables. This paper is concerned with the identification of these variables and is also concerned with, their influence, with the purpose of determining the existence of certain differences between the behaviour towards information with regard to international top managers and to possibly make a forecast of Croatian top manager's future behaviour towards this, and to make forecasts for the economics of a company, and the strategic input as well as to look towards other modern techniques of communication providing them with logistic support.

Keywords: behaviour towards business information, top managers, strategic decision.

1. INTRODUCTION

The dynamic changes in local and the broader environment of companies in Croatia provide new challenges for Croatian companies' managers and ask for them to rapidly adjust to new situations. Only some of the occurrences among those surveyed shall be given here. These determine which determine the top Croatian manager's behaviour towards information and illustrate those that require modifications in their behaviour. From the more important occurrences observed in Croatian companies the following have been selected:

- [1] the increase in the intensity of international competition on individual national markets through an intensifying of the processes of economic globalisation
- [2] more liberal market mechanisms and a better market democracy
- [3] an acceleration in the processes of restructuring economic activities as a result of the transition challenges and the changes in the broader national and international environment
- [4] the dynamic development of new computer and communication technologies, and the intensification in the need for their continual faster and broader application within companies.

The aforementioned mentioned occurrences and the newly created economic situations within Croatian companies provide new challenges for the top manager's responsibilities while performing their management duties. The active management of changes in operation

and the achievement of efficiency and effectiveness in business operations also presupposes the required changes in top management's behaviour towards the management of business information and databases. A good nose for business and the evaluation of risks, combined with personal creativity are not in themselves sufficient factors for the successful running of the business processes of a company in these times of dynamic economic changes. Our opinions in this respect are also confirmed by opinions/thoughts of a whole series of authors. Here we will quote Tipurić who says that: "managers will more and more often seek the answer to their problems through the use of new analytical and integrative knowledge, skills and intelligent systems, and increasingly less and less by pulling the strings of formal power and intuitions [1]".

One of the main responsibilities of the modern top manager is, the defining and the implementation of company strategies. In order to be able to define strategies, and to bring them forward and to control their implementation, top management needs information oriented towards the future of the different multi-disciplinary aspects of the behaviour of the immediate and broader company environment. This information is usually aggregated, less structured plus it contains an approximation for the future effectiveness of the implementation of strategic goals, it is bulkier and it operates over a wide area of interest for the company. It should predict crucial changes, tendencies and their possible influence on the company, as well as the reactions of the company to such changes and tendencies. Furthermore, such information must, at the same time, satisfy the basic quality requirements of the company.

The gathering of adequate information in countries with advanced computer science is made today by researching of primary occurrences, targeted scanning of the environment by use of one's managerial experience, as well as by the informal and formal structured and non-structured methods of data collection with the aim of providing solutions to specific decision making problems. The information systems are specially structured and created within the companies, and are customised for the needs of their top management. Abbreviations such as EIS and ESS have for some time been present within the practice of western companies and testify to the use of such systems.

These information systems ensure on-line access for the companies that employ them and provide their managers with the possibility of a swift reaction to the detected changes in the company's environment. Top managers need to be leaders in the implementation of such new information systems because the classical methods of obtaining and distributing business information are for most companies causing major problems.

The facts mentioned so far testify to a whole series of problems in the area of providing of business information for top managers. This is reason enough, but not the sole reason for trying to decipher in this work and within given Croatian conditions, Croatian top management's behaviour towards information and to indicate what are the necessary changes to be made in their behaviour in order to allow the information and communication base to secure long-term competitive advantages for the companies. In addition to the examination of the occurrences in practice, we have tried to gather data through the primary collection of data from the top managers themselves. To this purpose a written examination of a sample of 26 Croatian companies (from the group of first 150 companies ranked according to the criteria of generated income in 1998[2]) was made. The planned sample was of 100 top managers (General Directors and Presidents of Boards), but the response and the number of questionnaires returned was lower than expected and this was in itself an indication of the latest additional problems in this area of behaviour towards information.

Regardless of such a weak response and since the companies whose top managers have been examined have generated an income of 63.356,95 million kuna in 1998 and employed 108.571 people, we believe that a competent conclusion about the examined occurrences can be made on the basis of the sample mentioned above.

2. BASIC TRAITS OF THE BUSINESS INFORMATION MARKET IN CROATIA

By examining movements on the Croatian information market it can be concluded that the market of business information in Croatia is still in the early stages of growth. The main reasons for this slow and late development are the damages and the destruction brought upon the Croatian economy during the patriotic war, but also because of the processes of de-regulation and restructuring of the economy. In fact, the last two factors should have accelerated rather than slowed down the growth and development of this market, but this has not happened yet. The demand for business information as a market good is small while the existing and potential supply is way greater than the manifested demand, if the number of the suppliers is taken as the measuring parameter. The following variables have influenced supply and meant that it has grown quicker than demand: computerisation, telematisation, internationalisation, globalisation, the expert and scientific personnel that is available and the unavoidable development of communication networks such as CARNET.

The difficulties present in Croatian companies have forced many top managers to economise even in those areas where economising was not the most appropriate thing to do, and this meant economising with the business information necessary for strategic decision making and the elimination of the possible market risks. The market risks are the biggest and the most dangerous risks for the operation of a company. In spite of this, the investments into market research made by Croatian companies have been very small. In 1995 such investments amounted to a mere 0,05% of the GNP [3].

In order to illustrate this point further, companies in the EU countries invest from 0.13% (Luxembourg) to 2.86% (Sweden) of their GNP [4] into research and development (i.e. not only for the obtaining of business information) per annum. When the amounts invested by academic institutions and the state into development researches are added to the amounts above, the figures raise the GNP percentages and these from range 0.5% to 3.8%. Such an important contribution into investment surely stimulates the development of the information market in these countries.

Unfortunately, in Croatia the companies that have developed or are developing their long term strategic development plans are rare, and consequently the demand for such pieces of information is small. One could suppose that this kind of company behaviour, especially towards information of strategic importance, will not be continued if the aim is to overcome the existing economical crisis and successfully participate in the processes of globalisation. Such a positive change in behaviour should stir and liven up the demand for business information and generate a more dynamic fluctuation in the information market.

3. EXTERNAL INFORMATION RESOURCES AS A SUPPORT IN STRATEGIC DECISION-MAKING IN CROATIA

Once the business information market is created and shaped the supply and demand markets will begin to function. In addition to these pieces of information there are many other non-market and non-commercial sources of information that can satisfy top manager's needs. These external sources of information from the immediate environment of the company should be incorporated into the information system of every company in order to receive and recognise the indicators of relevant future events in the micro and macro environment of the company in enough time. Some of these external sources of information are public institutions and they have been providing their services, for free or for a symbolic charge, for a long time. Some of these institutions are mainly services for the providing of first-hand secondary data and information for top managers and therefore the managers approach them more often. In accordance with to their social importance, they are listed as follows: Croatian Chamber of Commerce, Statistical Office, Public Audit Service, Croatian National Bank, Croatian Office for Patents and Licenses and the Court of Registry.

Many other secondary resources are available to the top managers, ONLINE – national services and national data banks. While researching and evaluating the importance of business information sources for top managers in Croatia we have selected and structured numerically the national sources by macro-environment subsystems and they are given in the following table.

Table 1: Structure of bibliographic sources of business information for top managers in Croatia

External sources	State statistics	Institutes	Academ. and Faculties	State strategies of development of different economy sectors	Magazines	number of sources	
						ONLINE services	Data banks
Macro environment subsystems						Info-services	Data banks
Economic	19	4	17	-	22 9	13 3*	6 1*
Technical	3	9	24				
Political		1	1		72		
Law	3		4		52		
Social-cultural	15	16	23		87		
Natural – ecological	1	13	10	1			

*in construction

Source: Data collected and processed by the author from the following sources:

- [1] Pregled popisa, 1.5.2000, RRIF, Zagreb,
- [2] Business Information in Croatia,
- [3] Croatian bibliography, National and University Library, Zagreb, 1998,
- [4] [http:// www.monitor.hr/hrvodici/](http://www.monitor.hr/hrvodici/)
- [5] [http:// www.okbp.hr/linkovi.htm](http://www.okbp.hr/linkovi.htm)

It is difficult to establish the quality of these offered sources from the data provided by the table above but some ideas about their quantity can be obtained. In conditions of extremely low market demand for business information the given sources of information can provide ample information to satisfy the information needs of top managers. Croatia is a small country and therefore the potential of the public sources of information such as the Statistical Office is limited. Many statistical sources, particularly quite recently in fact, do not follow the economic phenomena at the different levels of the hierarchical structure of the state, which would be of interest to the top managers. While managers of large corporations can, to a certain extent, satisfy their needs for information about events that can have or actually do have an influence on the operation of their companies, managers of small and medium-sized companies have fewer possibilities. It would therefore be advisable that the economic associations and state institutions stimulate the forming of a collective information systems' servicing. Much richer and more advanced European countries have taken such steps and it can only be hoped that similar steps will be taken in Croatian practices also.

4. CROATIAN COMPANIES' TOP MANAGEMENT'S BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS INFORMATION

Hypothetically, the attitude of top managers towards business information in Croatian companies should not differ significantly from the behaviour of their colleagues in other European countries that have a market oriented economy. Certain differences could arise from the underdeveloped and shapeless economic organisation of the Croatian economy that still exists now. If examined from the point of the companies, their business goals are similar or the same and therefore the behaviour for their top management, at least towards strategic business information, should be similar with respect to their effectiveness and efficiency. The institutional framework within which the managers bring their decisions is very important and so is the stability of their micro and macro environment. It is for this reason that the condition in which the Croatian economy is found today should stimulate top managers into taking a more active role whilst trying to obtain business information. In addition to the aforementioned mentioned external market circumstances that demand changes in attitude, in order to be able to decide about their necessary direction and scope, a sample survey has been made. The analysed and processed results are given and explained here. This work does not expect the results of its research to be accepted as final decisions about management's behaviour because the sample was just too small. Furthermore, the sample was made up of representatives of different styles of management, which were created by individuals rather than in information systems. Regardless of these facts, we believe that we have obtained new information/ideas that can be of use as a guideline for the implementation of changes in the behaviour of top managers.

4.1. Motive of behaviour towards information

The behaviour of top managers towards business information and communication in their micro and macro environment as a crucial component of their responsibilities is mainly shaped by their basic motives from the priority scale as defined by Maslowe. Knowing their motives is important in the process of activating the change in their behaviour towards information because they actually contain their goals and control their managerial activities. The combined advantages of autonomy for decision-making like those that currently exist, plus the power of the position held in a company and the social acknowledgement of the

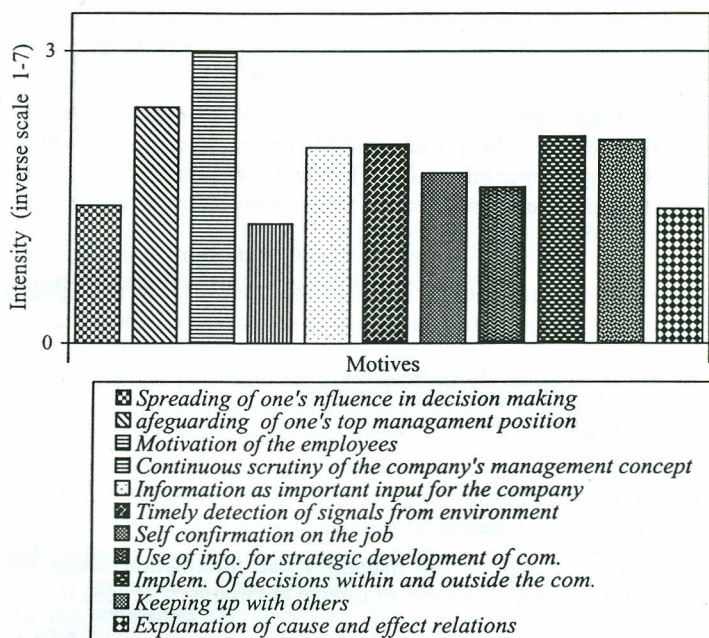
function held put forward motives of self-realisation, self-confirmation, an expansion of one's influence on the behaviour of his or her associates and partners both close and distant, and introduce the motive of securing the best position within the company. Other motives of different intensity can also be identified, instrumentalised by the hierarchical position of the managers in their decision making. The survey comprised of eleven motives for which it was presupposed that they would be relevant for the determination of the manager's relation towards information. It was found that the strongest, by intensity, instrumentalised motive was the use of information for the development of strategies aimed at the increase of growth and development of the company. The second motive quoted by top managers was the motive of using information for the timely detection of slight danger or as opportunity signals that may affect the company and which are sent off by the environment, while the personal motive, namely the increase of personal influence in decision-making ranked only third. The positions of other motives from the surveyed scale of motives can be observed in the following graphical illustration.

After having processed the data obtained from the interval motive scale by factor analysis the results showed that there were no groups of motives that had a common motivational effect on top managers. It was therefore impossible to show the so called "background" super motives (there are two or three) to make it to explain the motivational effects of the analysed motives on managers. The following motives exerted the most intensive common motivational effect towards one groups variable:

- self-confirmation
- the using of information for the developing of strategies of development of a company
- continual scrutiny of the concept of management of a company.

The motives of higher communication type such as: motivation of the employees to participate in decision making, implementation of decisions within and outside the company and keeping up with the amount of information possessed by other colleagues and business partners had quite a similar effect on top managers.

The analyses made also lead to the conclusion that instrumentalised motives for managing a company prevail in the analysed sample of top managers, which is a positive factor for the current and future demand of business information. The motives of personal prominence (at least this is what results from those statements that were collected and provided by the top manager showed) with an emphasised demonstration of power, were slightly repressed. The length of time a manager has spent as a manager, and the overall service are not in relevant co-relation with the tested motives. The relation with the motive of "time spent as a manager" variable ($r = 0,46794$) is slightly stronger than the variable of the "total length of service" ($r = 0,33057$). This outcome is quite understandable. However, as this co-relation is statistically quite weak, it is cannot be employed with significant relevance in predicting the future influences of this co-relation on the development of the intensity of managerial motives.



Graph no 1: Croatian top manager's motives for information seeking

Source: Author's processing of data on the basis of testing made during the year 2000.

The length of time a person has spent as a manager and the motive of guarding one's position as chairman of the board or general director is also weak and of inverse direction ($r = -0,25243$). Likewise, the relations between the motive of the constant monitoring of the concept of management of the company and the total length of service of a manager are also moving in an inverse direction ($r = -0,10596$). On the basis of the survey made for the correlation of other motives tested and the length of service it can be concluded that the tendencies to weaken of the relations are proportional to the length of service of the managers and these are actually present here. This result therefore speaks in favour of the need for constant renewing and permanent stimulation of such motives through various modes of continuous computer education for those managers holding a management function for several terms of office.

4.2. Top manager's behaviour towards external sources of information

The use of business information provided by the macro and micro environment of the company is to unavoidable for all top managers nowadays. If not only the national, but also the international macro-environment is taken into account then it must be concluded that top managers today encounter an almost unlimited number of varied sources of business information. In such a deluge of pieces of information and information sources it is difficult for managers to stay afloat without the help of special navigators and brokers, and thus, in

turn, satisfy their need for business information. Since secondary information sources are generally the cheapest, top managers in general use on such sources first. Top managers require to be informed about all those current events in the company environment that may, directly or indirectly, influence the company. Information of this type is necessary for several reasons. Only the most important reasons are mentioned here:

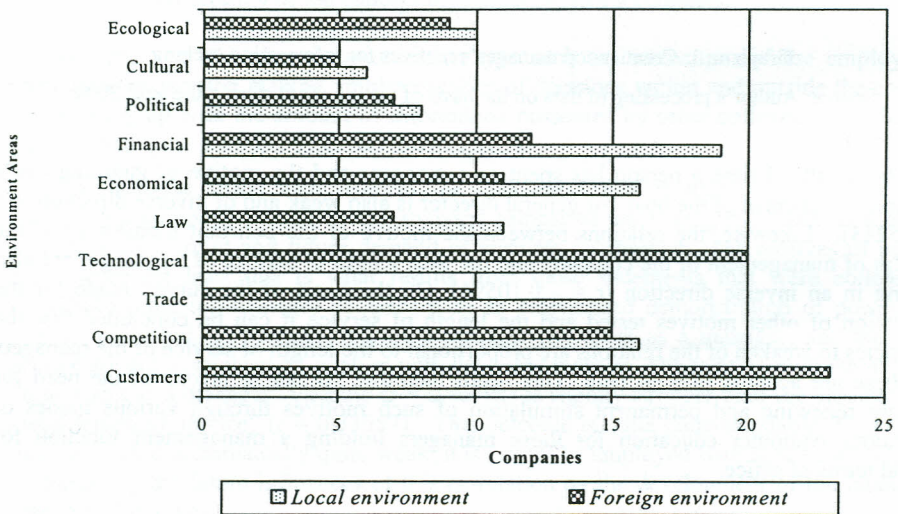
- to be able to react immediately
- to avoid being caught up in the “professional blindness” bind
- to be able to exchange proper information with business partners
- and to be able to create the impression of a person well-informed about what happens within and outside of the company.

Whilst researching the external sources of information used by top managers in Croatia, we have found that among the ten sources provided in the survey the most important for the managers are:

- talking to colleagues in the same line of business
- expert economy magazines
- and the WEB pages

In addition to this, an important role is played by expert magazines, *Privredni vjesnik* (The Economical Gazette) and specialised trade fairs.

When making strategic decisions top managers use information about the national environment and also include important areas of foreign environment as seen in Graph no. 2.



Graph no 2: The company's environment and information gathering areas that are used for strategic decision making

Source: The author's processing of data, based on a survey made in the year 2000.

The columns of the graph indicate differences between the sub-systems, and this is reasonable. What is surprising is the fact that whilst making strategic decisions lesser importance is given to the information from foreign environments or legal, trade and economic sub-systems than the levels of for the same information that comes from the national environment. It is a well-known fact that insufficient knowledge of foreign environment sub-systems may present serious risks for the operation of a company. Perhaps the managers surveyed only do business in the Croatian market and therefore the international market is not important to them.

4.3. Behaviour towards internal sources of information and processing of data for strategic decision-making

The most widely available readiest sources for top managers are the internal sources. How many are there and how they are used depends on the type of the information system used within a company. For this reason a short review of the type of information systems in use and their relation to top management follows. In most of the companies surveyed the information systems were organised as self-contained (in 81% of the companies tested) and user-friendly. 15% of those companies surveyed performed classical data processing that can only partly satisfy the modern needs for business information. A separate computer sub-system that functioned as a support in strategic decision-making (DSS) did not exist in any of those companies surveyed. In most of cases the information systems were self-contained and in 47,6% of the companies surveyed they functioned as operating units organisationally subservient to the top manager directly. In other cases, the information systems appeared within one of the functions in the company or within the EOP.

The most frequent sources of information for strategic decision-making are separate functions within a company. The survey showed that the functional areas of the company that served as sources for strategic information for top managers were ranked by importance as follows:

- marketing
- finances
- research and development
- accounting
- electronic data processing
- production
- personnel
- and finally company data archives.

This order of importance in those areas providing information within the company indicates that the managers are market oriented and this is a positive trend. Such an order is also one factors of the potential demand for information in the business information market.

The presence of this enormous amount of information within and outside company demands a major effort to be made on a daily basis by the top managers for the processing and preparation for the decision-making purposes. The average time spent by the sampled top managers every day doing these activities is in the range of 30% of their working time for data processing from internal sources, and slightly more for the processing of data from external sources.

Top managers spend the following percentages of their daily working time on the processing of data from internal and external sources:

Time spent on processing of	a) internal information % of managers surveyed	b) external information % of managers surveyed
up to 10% of daily work-time	43	13
> 10 to 30%	50	61
> 30%	7	26

Therefore, an important portion of the working time of the top managers is spent on the satisfaction of the need for information. It would therefore be useful in future research to discover the structure of such information seeking. Namely, during the survey we did not determine which proportion of time was spent on acquiring general information, and what was the amount of time spent for the preparation of strategic decisions. If the greater part of the determined time is spent on preparation for decision-making i.e. on the structuring of the problem for its solution and the finding of alternative solutions then such top management behaviour could be accepted as rational and productive. If however the time spent was used more for the accumulation of information that is not by its nature useful knowledge in decision making, then a change in the behaviour towards information should be suggested with the aim of increasing productivity and to ensure an economic use of the information.

The survey hoped to find out whether or not the top manager's information needs for use in strategic decision-making can be confirmed in writing at all. 65% of the top managers surveyed believed that this is only partly possible, while 35% believed that this could be accomplished in full. The truth probably lies somewhere in between these two notions.

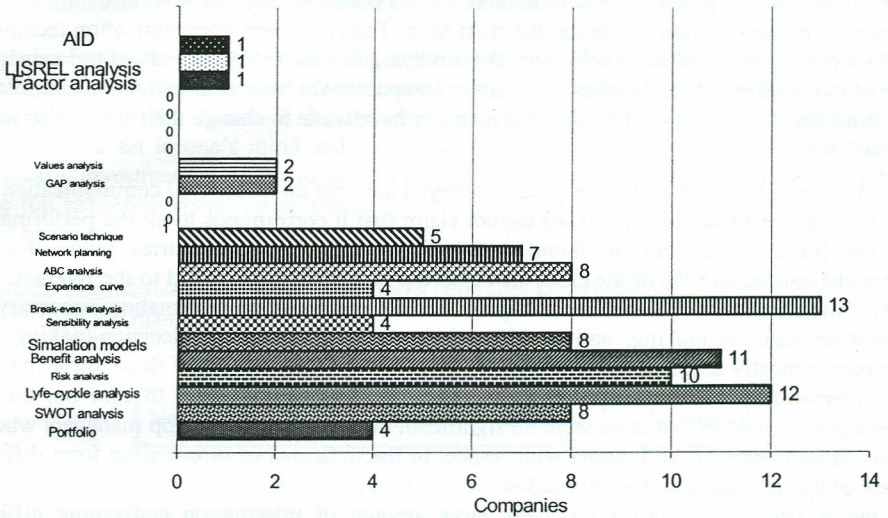
Many individuals, departments and services within the company, as well as external collaborators and legal subjects, participate and help top managers with the preparation of information for strategic decision making. Top managers most frequently engaged/used offices within separate departments of the company (69%). The second most frequently used office was the General Manager's Secretary's office (17%). Both the market research departments' and external collaborators' contribution was very small (7%).

Today in the preparation of information for strategic decision making the managers have at their disposal, different yet modern methods of data processing that can provide for a better quality of information. The results have shown that only some classical methods are more intensively applied (such as the break-even method) while modern methods are less used, especially those projected towards the future (such as the scenario technique). The portions of the relevant methods used among the surveyed managers is shown in Graph no. 3.

If the quality evaluations of top managers are authentic then we should be satisfied with the quality especially if we bear in mind the current economical situation in Croatia. It would certainly be useful to raise the quality measured by the criteria for safety to at least 85%, as well as to raise the quality measured for the criteria authenticity.

Researching the possible influence of the time a person has spent as a manager on the evaluation of quality we have found that there are some linear correlations between the length of time as a manager and the elements of quality, how up-to-date things are and authenticity. It was discovered that the longer period spent in service, the stronger is the importance given by managers to this element of quality of information ($r = 0,7036$ for the relation between the time spent on a management function and authenticity of information and $r = 0.8530$ for the relation with the total service of the manager). The completeness and safety features of information are both in correlation and are inversely directed i.e. the greater the length of

service the lesser importance is given to these two elements of quality in the evaluation of information ($r = -0.2400$ to -0.013).



Graph no 3: Use of models and methods in the preparation of information for manager's decision making

Source: The author's processing of data from a survey made in the year 2000.

The usefulness of information as an element of quality was in 54% of those cases surveyed evaluated as moderately important and in 42% of the cases as very important. Only 4% of the managers surveyed stated that they little use for information. This is a favourable result when information is treated as a good in a market exchange. Certainly, the managers should ensure that a balance be found between the funds spent for obtaining of information and the information's usefulness, i.e. about the general information related to the economy of the company.

Information for the strategic decision making of top managers prepared by other people should satisfy certain requirements of presentation for top managers. The top managers that surveyed were asked to rank their requirements in this respect and the highest ranking requirement was that it is easy to examine the layout of the information (73%), and that the information to be formatted as surveys or summaries (69%). These requirements were followed by its presentation in graphic form (58%) and that the information be concise (58%).

These managers wanted the information presented to them to be short and clear so that they would not need to spend additional time on the understanding of messages holding such information. Modern methods and techniques for computer formatting today offer different possibilities and these requirements can be adequately met.

4.4. The top manager's behavior toward communication

The scope and the quality of satisfaction of top manager's requirements for information depends on the use of adequate communication techniques, plus the relationships within the company and the communication with the environment. It is a well known fact that it is not only important to prepare the information for decision-making but it is also important to present it to the decision-makers at the right time. Today modern communication techniques offer a multitude of different solutions. By surveying the individual aspects of top manager's use of communication techniques in Croatian companies we have obtained an insight into the existing situation and the intentions that managers have made to change their behaviour within significant.

Almost half (44%) of the companies surveyed have set up an internal communication line for the transfer of data, however we cannot claim that it corresponds to all the performances of the Intranet that can be found within the companies in countries with advanced computerisation. In 85% of the cases surveyed top managers were linked to the Internet. This net is used mostly (44% of the surveyed) for the obtaining of information necessary for operative decision making, and in 30% of the cases for strategic decision-making. The Internet is mostly accessed from the work place (59%), while a third of those surveyed used the Internet for business purposes from home too. It was interesting to find out through contingency analysis that there were no significant differences between top managers who are users or non-users of the Internet with respect to the obtaining of information from different areas of the national and international activities. It was to be expected, however, that the users of the Internet would use a relatively large amount of information concerning different international areas than the non-users of Internet, however, this was not the case (ϕ - coefficient = 0,0449).

The managers surveyed declared that they used different techniques for the obtaining of information but mostly they used the telephone, fax, mail or mobile phones.

The classical techniques are still the most widely used. The use of e-mail is fairly widespread, and hopefully the Internet will be used more in the future also.

Three quarters of the top managers surveyed used a computer (77%). The group of computer non-users were not only older managers, but young managers as well, which is not socially acceptable behaviour. A quarter of the managers used notebooks, while a smaller proportion used a laptop.

In order to be able to prepare the information used in strategic decision-making top managers need to know how to use a certain set of software tools for data processing and report making.

The situation determined in the survey is not satisfactory. This is proven by the statements obtained about the possibilities of securing computer support to top managers. The existing computer software can secure for the top managers:

- a unique and innovative information basis (Data Warehouses) in 38% of the cases
- support in decision-making (Data Mart's) in 29% of the cases
- forecasting of the decision's results (Data Base Mining Marksman-DBMM) in 6% of the cases
- interactive evaluation of written reports (OLAP) in 6% of the cases

– current innovation with the computer base
the cases.

in 21% of

Top managers need additional computer training for the aforementioned use of the mentioned DBMM tools and training in the use of modern communication techniques. Such knowledge should be gained systematically through permanent computer training. The scope and the methods used in computer training can be seen the data given in Table 2.

It is obvious that existing behaviour in the acquisition of additional computer knowledge is not satisfactory both because of its minimal scope and for the way in which it is acquired, especially when the dynamics for the development of the software and communication technology is set in one's mind and a constant upgrading of technology and knowledge is necessary. Investment in such additional knowledge could significantly reduce the amount of time top managers spend on preparing information. Therefore their behaviour in this area must be changed.

Table 2. The methods used for the additional computer knowledge acquisition of top managers

n = 26

No.	Methods of knowledge acquisition	% cases
1.	Attending seminars	
	[1] once a year	40,0
	[2] twice a year	5,7
2.	Self-training	54,3
	[1] regularly	89,4
	[2] from time to time	10,5

Source: The author's processing of data collected in 2000.

5. CONCLUSION

Dynamic changes in Croatian companies' local and broader environment are influenced by different factors, but especially by the processes of economic globalization and the development of new technologies and these provide new challenges, tasks and responsibilities for the decision making top managers. In such conditions top managers must change their behaviour towards the use of information, especially towards such pieces of information that are used in strategic decision-making. In order to secure the supply of information from external sources a certain information-communication infrastructure has been set up in Croatia that offers information both for free and for a price. It is for this reason that demand for information as a market good i.e. a good that has a certain market price, is low, and the business information market is still undeveloped, even though the potential for development can be considered positive.

The behaviour of those top managers surveyed towards information is rooted in their motives for the use of information for the development of strategies, and for the correct detection of weak signals emitted by the environment concerning the dangers and the opportunities for the company, and for the strengthening of a manager's influence in the decision-making processes within a company. Therefore, instrumentalised motives for the

running of a company prevail for the on the purely personal motives, and this is contrary to international practice, and this can also be considered positive.

As with to their colleague's abroad, top managers in Croatia find that the most important external sources of information are their discussions with colleagues in partner companies, while information provided by specialised magazines and WEB pages also proves very valuable.

Most of the information used in decision-making is drawn from internal sources even though none of the companies surveyed have implemented a DSS or an EIS system. Most information is obtained from company departments such as marketing, finance, research and development and accounting. Top managers use on average 30% of their daily work time for the processing of information which is less than in other countries there the percentage is around 50%.

Top managers of those Croatian companies surveyed do not significantly lag behind those in Western European countries in terms of their use of the Internet and computers. However, they are a little behind in terms of their use of modern software tools for the preparation of information and in the use of systems for additional computer education. It is therefore recommended that in the future they be systematically included in customised forms of computer education so that they could use the most advanced tools for obtaining better quality whilst preparing preparation of information that will be used in strategic decision-making. This primarily refers to such software tools as Mikrostrategie Executive, Data Mart's, Data Base Mining Marksman, Balanced Scorecard, OLAP and others that can all improve the computer competence of top managers and contribute to an increase in the productivity and cost-effectiveness in the management of business information within a given company.

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INFORMACIJSKO PONAŠANJE MENADŽERA U HRVATSKOJ

Sažetak

Dinamične promjena užeg i šireg okruženja hrvatskih poduzeća zahtijevaju od top menadžera poduzeća brze i pravodobne reakcije za prilagodbe novonastalim očekivanim i neočekivanim poslovnim situacijama. Pravodobne akcije i reakcije u mnogome ovise od posjedovanja kvalitetnih poslovnih informacija i njihovoj značajkoj uporabi u procesima autonomnog odlučivanja top menadžera.

Ponašanje top menadžera prema poslovnim informacijama u procesima donošenja strateških odluka ovisno je od niza njihovih osobnih i instrumentaliziranih varijabli. U ovom se radu nastojalo spoznati te varijable i donekle njihov utjecaj na informacijsko ponašanje hrvatskih menadžera. Željelo se isto tako utvrditi postojanje određenih razlika u informacijskom ponašanju glavnih menadžera hrvatskih poduzeća prema inozemnim top menadžerima. Saznanja o njihovom postojećem ponašanju, trebala bi pripomoći u prognoziranju njihovog budućeg ponašanja prema poslovnim informacijama, koje kao što je poznato za ekonomiku poduzeća predstavljaju strateški input. Isto tako nove spoznaje mogu biti korisne za prognoziranje ponašanja prema uporabi suvremenih tehnika elektroničkog komuniciranja koje informacijskim tijekovima poduzeća pružaju potrebnu logističku potporu.

Ključne riječi: ponašanje prema poslovnim informacijama, glavni menadžeri, strateške odluke.