

Public Opinion Programme, The University of Hong Kong

Survey on Local NGOs' IT Application 2011 Executive Summary

30 June 2011

Research Background

1. In March 2011, Microsoft Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS) commissioned the Public Opinion Programme (POP) at the University of Hong Kong to conduct this "Survey on Local NGOs' IT Application 2011". The targets of this survey were representatives of local NGOs who were in a position to make decisions related to IT policies and development.
2. HKCSS invited 385 agency members to participate in this survey via email, end up 88 organizations were interested and their contacts were passed to HKUPOP for telephone interviews. The survey was conducted during the period of **14 April to 5 May 2011**. **Representative of 74 out of the 88 organizations** were successfully interviewed, the overall cooperative rate was **84.1%**, accounting to 19.2% of the total agency members. Assuming no response bias, at 95% confidence level, the sampling error for all percentages was less than plus/minus 10.4 percentage points.

Summary of Key Findings

3. In the past year, the average number of PCs and laptops provided to the staff by the NGOs interviewed was 165 (SD = 78.8). Average speaking, half of these computers were purchased or donated within 3 years prior to the interviews (50%), 37% were old computers installed more than 3 years ago, while 13% were old computers purchased or donated more than 3 years ago but were upgraded within the recent 3 years. Computers in nearly 9 out of every 10 NGOs interviewed had internet access (89%).
4. Half of the organizations had to send staff to work outside office with computers (51%), for instance, to remote login to the organization's application system. Among these organizations, 73% was equipped with the system / facilities required.
5. The majority of NGOs interviewed had been using "Internal / external communication (e.g. Email / IM) and "Financial Management System", accounting to 97% and 86% of the sample respectively. Another 62% had been

using “Membership Management system”, while the application rate of other IT systems was generally less than 50%, reflecting that more than half organizations did not fully utilize many IT software application systems. At the same time, almost half organizations were considering purchasing / updating “Membership Management System” (49%), while “Human Resource Management System” and “Volunteer Management System” were chosen by 36% of the respondents each.

6. As for security measures, more than 90% and 80% of organizations interviewed had “anti-virus” (91%) and “firewall” (82%) to protect their servers / application system respectively, however, quite some organizations did not have other security measures except the basic anti-virus system.
7. Half of the NGOs interviewed had set aside a specific amount of resources for improving IT facilities or increasing its applicability (50%) in the past year, representing a 17-percentage-point increment as compared to the figure registered in the 2009 survey. When asked if they would set aside a specific amount of resources for IT development in the coming year, 59% of them were positive. An upward trend was observed in the proportion of NGOs that had reserved budget for IT development.
8. For those who had reserved budget for IT development, more than 80% claimed that the budget was from “organization’s recurrent expenditure” (84%), followed by “grant/subsidy from the Government” (59%).
9. When asked the most conducive mode of subsidy for the IT development within the social welfare sector, more than 60% believed “IT development grant / subsidy from the Government (e.g. SWDF)” (65%) was most useful to them.
10. Nevertheless, opinions of representatives of local NGOs were split when they were asked to choose between “a lump sum” and “continuous subsidy”, with 41% opted for the former and 46% the latter. Respondents opted for “a lump sum” fund mainly because the subsidy could provide them with “more choices of facilities” (57%) and there was “no need to purchase / upgrade IT system / facilities every year” (57%), while those preferred “a continuous subsidy” was because they “could have continuous development / regular upgrade of IT system / facilities” (65%).
11. More than 70% of organizations considered “software and system development” (72%) as very important but did not have the resources / time / manpower to handle or execute, followed by “training” (68%) and “providing technical support to other colleagues” (65%).
12. On a scale of 0-10, satisfaction level towards both basic IT infrastructure (e.g. software / hardware) and current status of IT application obtained 6.1 marks. As for the need to improve the current IT facilities, the average rating obtained was

6.6 marks. Meanwhile, an average rating of 5.0 marks was registered for the sufficiency of resources used for improving IT facilities allocated by their organization, meaning “half-half”.

13. The biggest challenge in IT development was “lack of IT specialist / knowledge” (66%), followed closely by “insufficient fund” (65%), as reported by the NGOs interviewed.
14. Results revealed that 70% of the respondent had heard of “Cloud Computing” before. Meanwhile, 30% believed “Cloud Computing” could effectively solve their problems in IT development, whereas almost 40% thought the opposite (39%), less than one-tenth believed it could solve only part of the problems (7%) and close to a quarter opted for “don’t know / hard to say” (24%).
15. If there was a territory-wide centralized management system for donors and volunteers, i.e. the social welfare organizations involved in the system could share / obtain data and information on an internet platform, almost two-thirds were willing to participate (64%), while only 9% held an opposite view, and the remaining were undecided at the moment.

In-depth Analysis

16. In-depth analysis showed that the larger the size of the organization, the more likely its representative would have heard of “Cloud Computing” prior to the interview (see Table 1). Those who had heard of “Cloud Computing” were more likely to believe it could effectively solve their problems in IT development. Moreover, IT specialists were more likely than non-IT specialists to believe this technology could effectively solve their problems (see Table 2).

Table 1 Awareness of “Cloud Computing” in different types of organizations

	Representatives of small size organizations	Representatives of medium size organizations	Representatives of large size organizations
Aware of “Cloud Computing”	42%	61%	92%

Note: organizations were categorized by their annual expenditure, those with annual expenditure below \$1 million were categorized as “small size organizations”, those with annual expenditure between \$1 million and \$10 million were categorized as “medium size organizations”, and those with more than \$10 million were categorized as “large size organizations”.

Table 2 Different respondents' views on whether "Cloud Computing" could effectively solve their IT problems

	Believed "Cloud Computing" could solve the challenge of IT development
Never heard of "Cloud Computing"	19%
Heard of "Cloud Computing"	34%
Non-IT specialists	22%
IT specialists	48%

Comparison with results of 2009 survey

17. HKCSS conducted a similar opinion survey in 2009, targeting also their agency members, while and sample size, question design and their options were different. Special caution was required when comparing the results. As regards IT infrastructure, a rather steady development was observed in the last 2 years. In terms of the number of computers, the average number of PCs and laptops provided to their staff had increased from 121 in 2009 to 165 this year (see Table 3).

Table 3 Number of computers in organizations interviewed in 2009 and 2011.

	2009	2011
Mean	121	165
Error	+/-45	+/-97
Median	30	48
Base	101	72

18. When compared to the findings in 2009, organizations interviewed this year were significantly less satisfied with the IT infrastructure (6.6 marks in 2009 vs 6.1 marks in 2011), and were also somewhat less satisfied with the IT application (6.5 marks in 2009 vs 6.1 marks in 2011). Regarding the need to improve current IT facilities, the average ratings obtained in both surveys were 6.6 marks. As for whether they had sufficient resources for improving IT facilities, the respective ratings of 2009 and 2011 surveys were 5.1 marks and 5.0 marks, meaning close to "half-half" and remained very stable (see Figure 1 and Table 4).

Figure 1 Respondents' satisfaction level on IT infrastructure and application

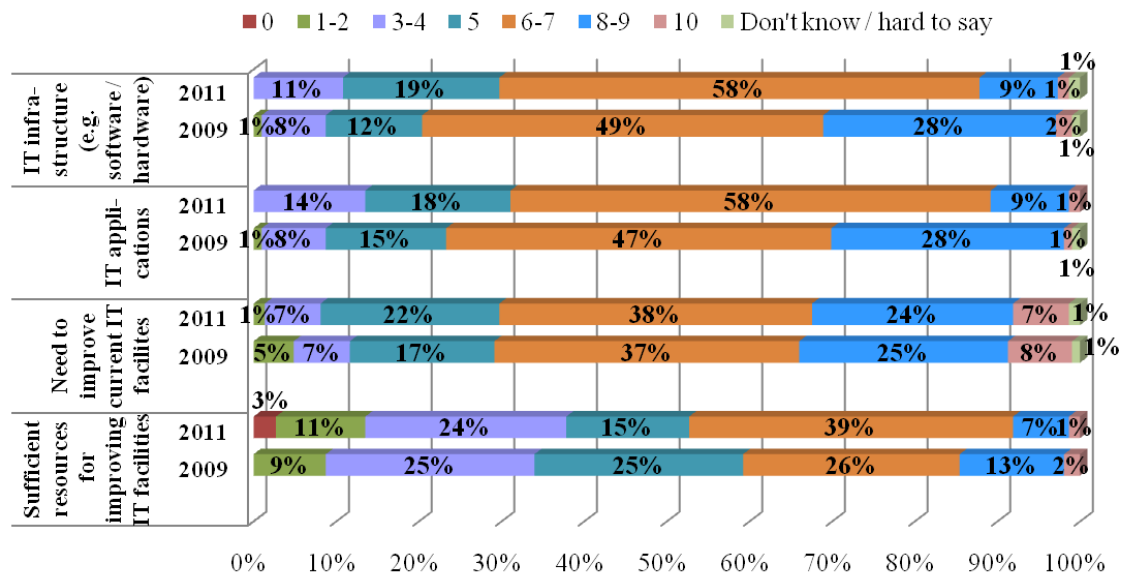


Table 4 Respondents' satisfaction level on IT infrastructure and application (average rating)

	2009	2011
Basic IT infrastructure (e.g. software/ hardware)	6.6 (Base =102)	6.1* (Base =73)
Current status of IT applications	6.5 (Base =102)	6.1 (Base =74)
Need to improve the current IT facilities	6.6 (Base =102)	6.6 (Base =73)
Sufficiency of resources for improving IT facilities	5.1 (Base =103)	5.0 (Base =74)

* Difference is statistically significant at p<0.05 level