SESSION REPORT

61	M371	Information Center Project Intro	75
SHARE NO.	SESSION NO.	SESSION TITLE	ATTENDANCE

Information Center	Sharon Woelfling	AMP
PROJECT	SESSION CHAIRMAN	INST. CODE

AMP Inc., P.O. Box 3608, Harrisburg, PA 17105 717-986-7292

SESSION CHAIRMAN'S COMPANY, ADDRESS, and PHONE NUMBER

Information Center Project members and officers were introduced. Several handouts were provided including:

1. A Session grid for IC sponsored sessions
2. A summary of related sessions of interest
3. A survey to be returned by mail
4. A questionaire to be returned during SHARE week with topics of interest to attendees and questions to be answered this week.

Results of the questionnaire from a previous SHARE were presented. Attached is a copy of this report

Information Center Project Questionnaire Report

SHARE 61

New York, August, 1983

K.J. Sours (SPH)
SPSS Inc.

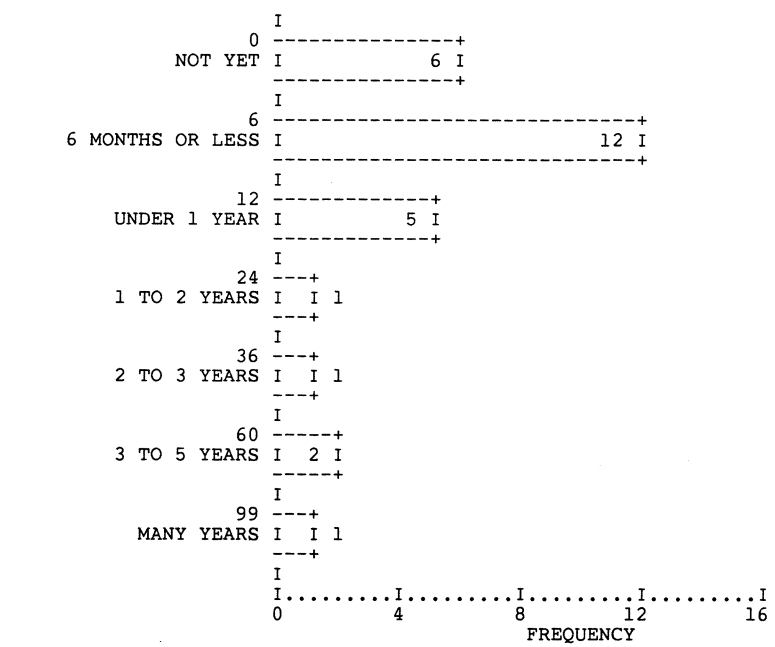
These results were compiled from 35 questionnaires returned to the Information Center Project at SHARE 59 in New Orleans. While this number of respondents is not enough to make any real conclusions about the makeup of information centers in general, we hope to build our respondent base in the future and begin to compare trends over the next few years.

1 NUMBER OF MONTHS IN OPERATION 2
2 SIZE OF STAFF 3
3 NUMBER OF DEPARTMENTS SERVICED 4
4 OPERATING SYSTEM ENVIRONMENT 5
5 SOFTWARE PROVIDED 6
6 TOPICS FOR FUTURE SHARE MEETINGS 7

1 NUMBER OF MONTHS IN OPERATION

For the past few SHARE meetings, those that come to the Information Center Project sessions tend to be from newly-initiated centers or centers that have not even begun. We expect this trend to diminish over the next few years, but the chart in Figure 1 shows that we have a way to go yet.

Figure 1 Months in operation



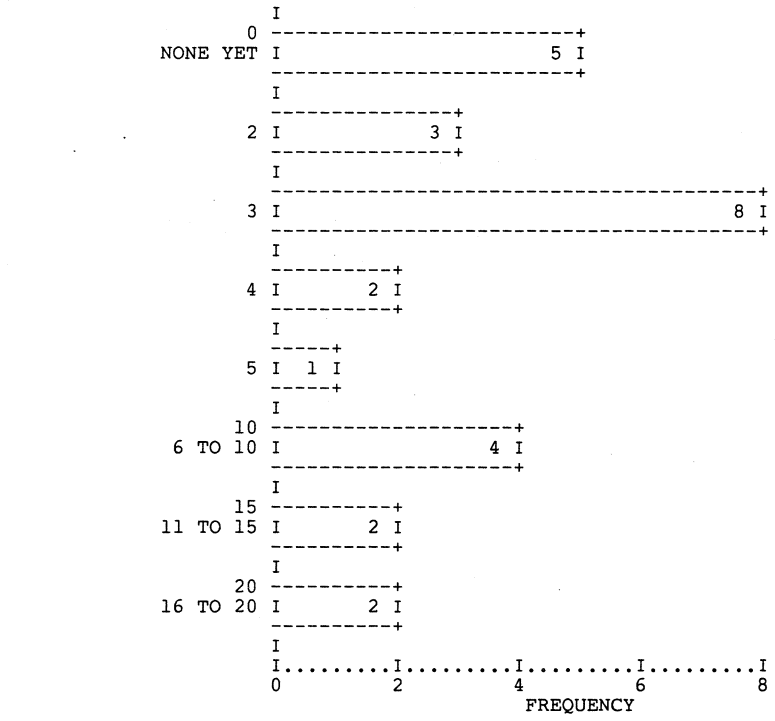
VALID CASES 28 MISSING CASES 7

The chart in Figure 1 shows that 23 out of the 28 that responded to the question regarding the number of months in operation said that they worked at a center that had been open one year or less. Six, or 21.4%, said that their center hadn't even started. We need more respondents to determine whether these results have any real validity, but they seem quite believable.

2 SIZE OF STAFF

One of the questions attendees frequently ask is some formulation of "what is the optimal ratio of staff to user in an information center?" We therefore asked how large the staff is at the respondent's site. The answers varied a great deal with the majority of the centers reporting fewer than ten on the staff. The chart in Figure 2 shows that it's common to find only two or three staff members (never only one.) Some centers, however, seem to be quite well staffed.

Figure 2 Number on IC staff

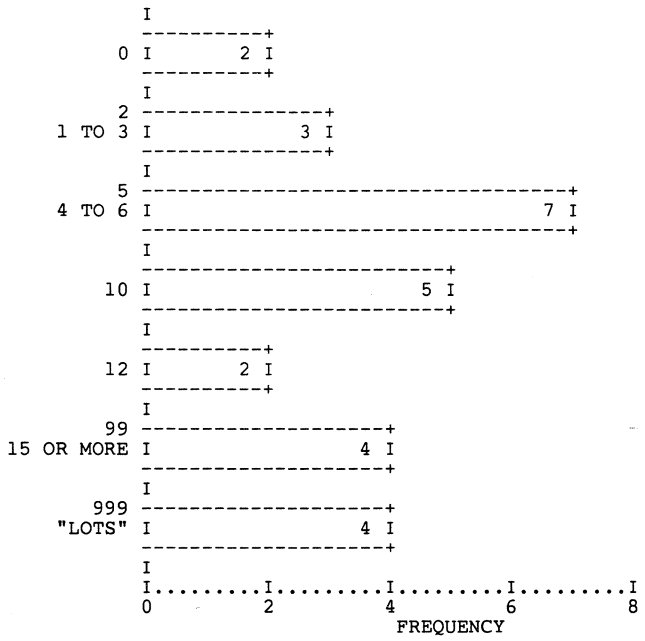


VALID CASES 27 MISSING CASES 8

3 NUMBER OF DEPARTMENTS SERVICED

To try to answer the question of the optimal staff/user ratio, we asked how many user departments (rather than the actual number of users) were serviced by the information center. The chart in Figure 3 shows quite a spread for such a small number of respondents. It does not seem unusual for an information center to be serving 6 or more departments.

Figure 3 Number of user departments



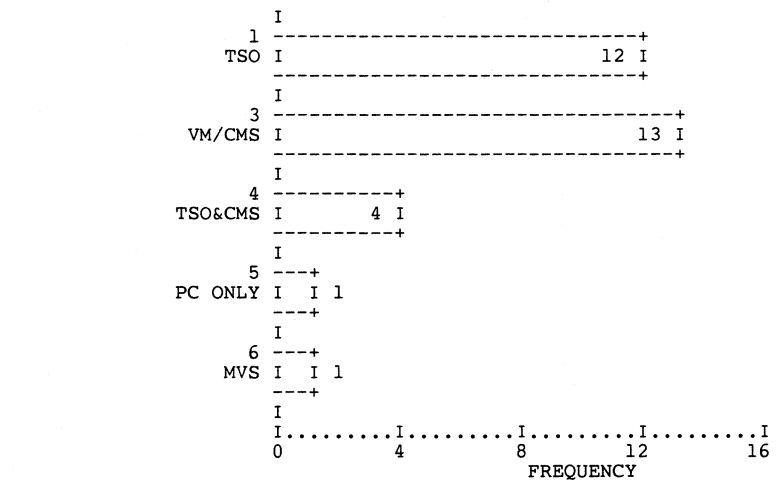
VALID CASES 27 MISSING CASES 8

The overall staff/user department ratio reported is about 1 staff member for each 2.4 departments. This figure is taken from the 17 respondents who answered both questions, did not say either zero staff members or zero departments, or who did not say "lots" for either. This ratio is the average of ratios that ranged from 1:6.7 to 2:1.

4 OPERATING SYSTEM ENVIRONMENT

The operating system of choice for our respondents, shown in Figure 4, seems quite evenly divided between TSO and VM/CMS. It will be very interesting to see if this division holds up over the next few years. It does however answer the question we sometimes hear, "Can an information center run in a TSO environment?" Apparently it can.

Figure 4 Operating system



VALID CASES 31 MISSING CASES 4

The question of PC's and certainly of an Information Center than runs on PC's only will have to be dealt with in the future as the question arises. Also, the question of Brand X hardware/software has not been addressed in these questionnaires.

5 SOFTWARE PROVIDED

Another very popular question is about what software to provide. The questionnaire in the past left this open for respondents to fill in. While many respondents may overlook some of their offerings in an open list such as this, the table in Figure 5 shows a fair mix of products. Each time a respondent indicated a product, it was counted. Therefore, the column total of 99 responses shows that many listed more than one. To calculate how popular a given product is, use 26 as your base since that is the number of respondents who answered the question. For example, 53.8% reported SAS, 38.4% reported FOCUS, 32.1% reported SPSS, 23.1% reported ADRS, etc. Naturally, these percentages add up to greater than 100%.

Figure 5 Software offered

VALUE LABEL	VALUE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
SAS	7	14	14.1
FOCUS	3	10	10.1
SPSS	10	9	9.1
ADRS	1	6	6.1
EASYTRIEVE	11	5	5.1
GDDM	6	4	4.0
SAS/GRAPH	8	4	4.0
SCRIPT	15	4	4.0
ADRSBG	2	3	3.0
RAMIS	4	3	3.0
APL	5	3	3.0
DCF	14	3	3.0
TEL-A-GRAF	16	3	3.0
PROFS	17	3	3.0
WYLBUR	18	3	3.0
VARIOUS PC	99	3	3.0
QBE	12	2	2.0
INQUIRE	13	2	2.0
BASIC	19	2	2.0
AUTOTAB	22	2	2.0
MARKIV	24	2	2.0
SPF	27	2	2.0
NATURAL	28	2	2.0
SAS/FSP	9	1	1.0
EMPIRE	20	1	1.0
SPF	23	1	1.0
ADABAS	25	1	1.0
TOTAL	26	1	1.0
	TOTAL	99	100.0

6 TOPICS FOR FUTURE SHARE MEETINGS

There was slight controversy over how to score the responses to the topics questions in order to rank them, although it was quite clear what the really popular topics are. Some IC Project members felt that assigning the value 2 for Hi, 1 for Med, 0 for Low (there was no None) was the best way to calculate relative popularity whereas others felt that assigning a -1 to Low would give more realistic weight to respondents' disinterest in a topic. Therefore, the questions were ranked both ways and the results are shown in the table in Figure 6. Obviously, there isn't much difference since only three topics changed ranking more than one position. Therefore, we have added a None category to the newer questionnaire, eliminated the least popular topics (on both scales), and added a few new ones. In the future, the numbers 2, 1, 0, and -1 will be assigned to Hi, Med, Lo, and None.

Figure 6 Topics ranked both ways

RANK1	RANK2	TOPIC
1	1	Personal computers and the IC
2	2	User friendly environment
3	4	Product selection and products in use
4	3	Plans and controls
5	6	Coordinating IC & application development
6	5	How office automation fits in
7	8	Training and development of staff
8	7	Marketing and promoting the IC
9	9	DP organization and where the IC fits
10	10	Training and educating users
11	15*	Technical support required
12	14*	Security
13	12	Controlling user data access
14	13	Interface to Information Systems
15	16	User standards and auditing
16	11*	Documentation
17	18	Structure and internal organization
18	17	Managing shared development concept
19	20	Internal documentation requirements
20	19	Service level agreements/support levels
21	21	Cost justification methods
22	23	Capacity planning methods
23	22	Interface to business community
24	25	Charge back methods
25	24	Library function within IC
26	26	Relationship of external timesharing
27	27	Distinction from timesharing

*more than one position difference