

11.4: Summary

Summary

Information technology has been a driving force behind globalization, transforming how business is conducted worldwide. As Castells and Friedman observed, digital tools now allow people and organizations to collaborate across borders as never before.

Businesses have leveraged these technologies to expand their operations globally. They have gained access to more labor pools, suppliers, and a worldwide world. Information systems have enabled 24/7 operations by linking employees across time zones. However, these global connections have also introduced challenges. Companies must now navigate varying regulations, cultural preferences, and infrastructure reliability between countries. Marketing, product development, and HR processes require localization for diverse international audiences.

While some organizations operate globally, many lack access to digital tools and networks. Nielsen's three-stage model describes that the digital divide persists due to economic, usability, and empowerment gaps. The COVID-19 pandemic underscored these inequalities, with the UN declaring the digital divide a matter of life and death. Ongoing efforts from both public and private sectors seek to address it.

This chapter explores both the opportunities and ethical complications presented by information systems' role in globalization and connectivity. These issues will continue shaping how technology progresses worldwide.

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