

Abstract Submission

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Abstract

We now live in an always connected communication environment and as a result interruptions are becoming a pervasive element within the modern workplace. In recent years increased reliance on computer-mediated communications (CMC) have resulted in an expectation of constant availability and the immediate response to an interruption. These technology interruptions are becoming so frequent in the workplace that they decrease rather than increase productivity. Research has shown that interruptions can result in accidents and decrease productivity in domains as diverse as the cockpit, hospitals and the office.

The objective of this research is to investigate the impact of technology interruptions on the knowledge worker in a software development organisation and to understand the steps taken to reduce or minimise the effect constant interruptions can have on their workload or performance.

An online survey and semi-structured interviews were chosen as the most suitable strategy for answering the research question. The findings indicate that while performance is impacted by an overload of technology interruptions, few actions are taken to minimise or reduce the interruptions mostly because they are expected as part of the knowledge workers function.