



## Is your IT organisation open for business?

The IT industry is seeking to persuade us that 'cloud' is a brave new world for both IT and business. However, it is perhaps the convergence of cloud, consumerisation of computing and social media that is the real challenge for CIOs and the real opportunity for their businesses.

In a group discussion with several CIOs in 2011, they opined that of these three emerging technologies, it was social media that had the greatest potential impact for business, opening up new channels of communication, learning and interaction – both internally and externally.

More recently, a larger group of CIOs was most concerned about consumerisation, particularly the demands of their users who more and more were doing their own computing on tablets, not unlike what happened in the dawning of the PC era. Ironically, the majority of these CIOs were active users of tablets themselves, mostly iPads!

Both groups had reservations about cloud. In particular, they were concerned about security and still unsure about the economics, but were dabbling in private clouds.

Let us look at these emerging technologies from the perspective of users. They are being pulled into Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and so on by their families and friends, by customer pressure, and by enthusiastic peers. With their tablets they not only compute almost anywhere, anytime, but also buy their own applications, access information from diverse sources, and see what modern information presentation can look like in contrast to the stuffy outputs of the seemingly antediluvian corporate systems they used to rely on.

Then perhaps in activity-based groups, in local business units or in their part-time work in other organisations they see the attraction of cloud in terms of accessibility, flexibility and scalability.

In other words, the name of the game in IT is becoming open technology. This is far more than the old ideas of open systems and open standards. It is open information environments created and accessed by all of us who see the previously closed boundaries of infrastructure and applications being blown apart. Some



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## 2013 is the year of NFC

By 2013, one in five mobile phones are expected to be NFC-equipped. What's that, you ask? Near Field Communication essentially lets you replace your credit cards with your phone: wave an NFC-enabled phone near the credit card reader in a store (or taxi cab) and the money is deducted from your account.

This is just one example of the pace of change that Pete Cashmore believes has become blisteringly fast, with traditional industries like bookstores, video-rental chains and newspapers crumbling more quickly than we could have imagined.

Examples of other technologies that he believes will have a profound impact on our lives include touch computing, social gestures, beyond the iPad, TV everywhere, voice control, special gestures, second-screen experiences, flexible screens and HTML5.

To read Pete's CNN article, click [here](#).

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## By 2016 almost half the world's population will be Internet users

The Internet has ingrained itself in daily life to the extent that most of us no longer think of it as anything new or special. It has become, quite simply, indispensable.

But in a recent BCG report – [The Internet Economy in the G-20](#) – it's argued that the scale and pace of change is still accelerating. More importantly, the nature of the Internet, in terms of who uses it, how and for what, is changing rapidly too.

Furthermore, some of the numbers quoted in the report are staggering. For example, by 2016 there will be 3 billion Internet users globally – almost half of the world's population. The Internet economy will reach \$4.2 trillion in the G-20 economies, and if the Internet was a national economy it would rank in the world's top five. And mobile devices – smartphones

observers have seen this as an ‘Arab Spring’ of IT.

However, I prefer to think of this new era as one of Glasnost; that is of opening up and with it availability and transparency of information, just as in a different sense what happened in President Gorbachev’s days.

So for CIOs and their IT departments, there is a classical control versus freedom dilemma. On the one hand control may bring security in many dimensions, and on the other hand it could limit their organisations from embracing new ways of working and even lead to the IT function itself being seen as Luddite. Yet a preference for freedom would lead to untold exposures, escalation of IT costs, and a patchwork quilt of unconnected technologies and applications.

Thus now is the time for CIOs to re-assess their technological scope, rethink their concepts of architecture, do some reskilling and reflect on whether the ‘I’ in CIO is what they really should be responsible for. The question is: how open should IT be for business?

If you would like to read my full article, click [here](#).

I welcome your thoughts.

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and tablets – will account for four out of five broadband connections by 2016.

The report argues that it has reached a scale and level of impact that no business, industry or government can ignore.

To read the report, click [here](#).

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## Optimising your HR Operating Model

If you feel that your HR Operating Model could be better optimised there’s still time to join a research project we’re starting next month.

The project is open to organisations that have either undergone a transformation of their HR function or are considering how best to organise HR so that it is truly optimised in terms of quality, performance and cost.

The aim is to identify the principles, practices and criteria for designing and optimising an HR Operating Model.

More details can be found on our [website](#).

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## Parting thought

“Everything that can be invented has been invented.”

Charles H Duell  
United States Commissioner of Patents  
1850 – 1920