

This year's Gartner Fall Symposium/ITxpo – held from 3rd to 7th November in Cannes, France – was organized around the theme of IT and the economy. This report offers an overview of what was on attendees' minds and what they learned from Gartner analysts and each other.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Not surprisingly, the sagging economy and its consequences for security and risk professionals was a prominent topic. Other perennial issues of concern to security specialists were also much discussed, however – issues such as the security challenges brought on by the consumerization of IT, the global economy, identity and access management, and compliance and risk issues.

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

Beyond MarketScopes and Magic Quadrants: Architecting a GRC Solution

During the next several years, we will see the transition from compliance and risk management as a necessary, but unproductive, task to a focus on business performance as an element of governance, risk and compliance (GRC) investments. Of course not all GRC investments will focus on performance – an enterprise should have investments that bring value from tactical to strategic. To get the maximum value, GRC investments should be guided by common architectural and governance principles.

Gartner recommends that compliance and risk officers:

- Ensure business alignment. The IT component of the GRC solution should be relevant to each enterprise's business goals and risks.
- When using Gartner methodologies to make decisions, don't just consider the most highly rated vendors and most mature technologies – a niche vendor may be best able to solve your problem.
- Link GRC initiatives to other critical business strategies and objectives, rather than having stand-alone GRC projects.

Workshop: Assess Your Risk and Security Program Maturity

Information risk management always begins with the problem that some people think the occurrence or otherwise of security breaches is the only real measure of success. Responsible information risk management personnel need to use alternative indicators of maturity such as formalization, organizational alignment, automation, stability, metrics, performance and accountability. The maturity model used at this workshop allows users to communicate their position to the business in terms the organization can understand and appreciate. As key priorities the recommendations were to make sure the right people are in place in the recommended positions, that process owners are appointed, that the business is constantly kept informed of your work and that greater accountability is built into the process.

How Identity and Access Management Contributes to Your Key Business Imperatives

Identity and access management (IAM) processes integrate with other information security processes, such as threat and vulnerability management, risk and control assessment, and communications and relationship management. IAM processes must also integrate with business processes, such as employee "onboarding" and customer registration. By abstracting identity management and access controls from applications, IAM allows application developers to focus on business needs and allows them to make innovative use of new technologies that contribute to overall business agility. IAM can ensure that your workforce can quickly have the necessary access when needs change in response to new business challenges. Security officers must make the business case for IAM by engaging all stakeholders across the business, showing how IAM can add value by helping:

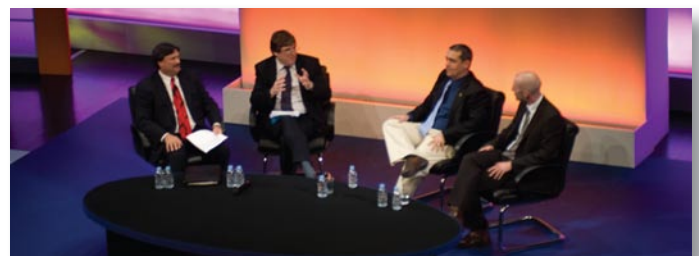
- Attract and retain customers
- Build an innovative and agile organization
- Improve critical business processes and workflows
- Maximize performance, profitability and competitiveness

Surviving the Threats Posed by the Consumerization of IT

Conditions are making it more difficult for organizations to maintain the security control that some of them would like. In particular, Web 2.0-style applications that don't need to be installed on users' PCs give users with Internet access a huge amount of freedom to run their choice of applications. While this does not create configuration issues, it still represents an investment in nonapproved technologies and could represent data exposures. Beyond that, applications that don't need administrator rights to install and applications that users will be able to install in a virtual machine or in an isolated manner are here or will be soon. Digital natives are more proficient with technology, and they are entering the workforce and making technology demands.

With higher levels of user autonomy, the security focus needs to shift from security on the platform, to security that directly protects corporate data and the corporate network. Security officers must:

- Accept that consumerization is here to stay. You will not be able to say no to it.
- Accept that it is very unlikely the mainframe will come back.
- Match your security approach to the path your company is taking. If none is apparent, start with identity-aware networking.



KEYNOTES

Welcome Address and Analyst Keynote

There are no easy or safe decisions in the next year – get over it. Be smarter, conquer your fear and make the hard choices. We are in a new age in which IT is still essential... But so is change. Gartner recommends you take action now; examine your inventory, rank it to find your priorities, question everything you have, protect your key people who can deliver your priorities, reconsider each budget line, plan for multiple futures and then choose where to cut AND where to spend.

IT is very good at acquiring systems but it's time to learn how to "manage what you have." Use this opportunity to move from the accidental legacy architecture you have inherited toward a 21st Century sustainable architecture. Use the downturn to modernise and prepare for the return to growth; remember this is your chance to get executive support for the change process so you can do what's necessary.

It's also time to innovate. It's time to "learn to let go" instead of always seeking to control and stamp out user driven innovation and technology choices. Find the opportunities for reinvention. By cultivating innovation and recalibrating your awareness of where differences can be made you will be able to drive down costs and harness new ideas. You need to upgrade or you risk lower speed, lower power and performance than more agile competitors. Do rationalise your portfolio but be careful! Exploit commoditization, use the cloud, and leverage partners where appropriate. Take stock and decide what you need... And what you can change. We live in interesting times; it's time to focus, it's time for courage, it's time to get started.

Mastermind Interview: Ian Livingston, CEO, BT

For the next year, things are going to be tough across the business world. The key message from Ian Livingston, CEO of BT, is you should plan for it – being prepared won't harm you. No one is recession proof. No one is going to escape the present climate unscathed. Companies should be looking at both the top and bottom line simultaneously, to cost cutting as well as continuing to seek opportunities for revenue growth.

Remember that in this difficult time the need for green IT is not going to go away. And with innovations like telepresence and virtualization, it isn't a case of paying for green IT at the expense of the business. Green IT can and does save you money if approached sensibly, and is something customers want to be a part of.

Reducing headcount is definitely going to be one of the core approaches CEOs adopt; it's inevitable. When talking to its customers, BT is finding that they are examining costs and looking to refocus on higher growth regions of the world. The opportunity for IT is to streamline the bureaucracy and to move to a position where the CIO and the key IT management are change leaders and change enablers contributing to overall business efficiency and effectiveness.

Radical moves in the name of cost cutting are not the right approach. Use technology and process to reduce failure, work on increasing agility and ensure customer experience is at the forefront of each decision. This has to be the answer; making the organization more able to realize opportunity and deliver to customers more effectively. Don't force people to use new technologies; think about where social networking technologies, cloud

computing, Software as a Service (SaaS) and remote working can make life better for the business and for employees and use the technology to serve those ends – make people want to use the new approaches.

Mastermind Interview: Contractions and Balance: Business is IT and IT is Business: Steve Chambers, CIO and Valerie Dias, Executive Vice President, Chief Risk and Compliance Office, Visa Europe

How to get Business and IT to work effectively together is a constant question. The first step is to stop asking the question – the divide between business and IT does not exist unless you create it. In Visa, they have formed joint project boards and everyone is encouraged to continually ask "why?" It's vital to identify, in clear business terms, the purpose and goal of a project. Success must be measured in business terms – how will the project positively impact the business?

It's important that everyone understands that they are all part of the one organisation. Creating trust at all levels across the business and within IT is critical. Visa ensures this by having an IT directorate embedded throughout the organisation. All project teams should ask the "why?" question when they are asked to undertake a project. This close relationship between business and IT can be the key to achieving competitive advantage. If IT is not closely aligned to the business, a gap is created that will add unnecessary risk, time, complexity and cost to a project. A key objective for any CIO should be to minimize this space.

Overcoming scepticism can be a difficult hurdle. Leaders need to be firm in their beliefs, demonstrating on a practical level that their ideas and solutions can work. This process may take some time, but over time, behaviours and attitudes will begin to change. Success breeds change, which in turn breeds more success. Leaders need to have a sustained vision and purpose to ensure this.

People, politics and personalities are often the root cause of conflict. Conflict can, however, be useful, so long as it is focused on solving the challenge and moving forward. But when conflict becomes about entrenched positions and blame, then it benefits no one.

If you can't articulate the value of technology spend... then all you are doing is spending money. Always, always, ask "why?"

THINGS TO WATCH FOR

The key to making progress in security is staying ahead of changes, which means recognizing changes in business processes, threats and security technologies. The next step is applying a realistic mix of tactical and strategic steps toward increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of your security program. Key security challenges for 2009 will include reducing operational costs, supporting business changes, staying ahead of threats and demonstrating compliance. To deal with changing threats, changing business environments and continuing budget pressures, enterprises must become more effective and more efficient at protecting customer and business data.

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