Chapter IV

The Technology Conversation - How The World Should Work

This is a monster chapter, with tons of stuff and just enough jargon to make you angry – even if you’re a technologist. The challenge here is to focus on the important issues and avoid as many of the relatively unimportant ones as we can. Like anyone developing an agenda, this conversation has something for everyone but hopefully not too much of any one thing for anyone. Here’s the list:

- **We spend too much money on business technology** – way too much. How come? Because we invest in the wrong stuff (and often do it stupidly). It’s time to stop doing this and time to start investing with the uber (collaboration/integration) filters.

- **There are five not-so-easy pieces to this puzzle: applications, data, communications, infrastructure and security/privacy.** These pieces – along with the collaboration stuff we discussed in Chapter III - should occupy your time.

- **Your applications** must integrate (and you therefore must become real good at picking the right glue to make them all work together). There should not be hundreds or thousands of applications in your company; you should not adopt a “best-of-breed” applications strategy. You deploy applications that give you analytical insight into your collaboration envi-
ronment. You should follow the big vendors technology standards directions; and you should pilot some Web Services applications – the glue that just might make a major difference.

- **Data is still the lifeblood of your company**, so make sure it’s clean, accessible and located in only a few “platforms.” If you support Oracle, IBM, Microsoft and other large database platforms, you’re insane, and you’ll have to spend tons of money supporting these platforms as well as the data warehouses you’ll have to build to be able to collaborate.

- **Communications is wired, wireless, narrowband, broadband and happens on desktops, laptops, PDAs, pagers and all sorts of converged devices.** Pay attention to the adoption of wired and wireless broadband, wireless collaborative applications and the integration of voice and data communications over IP (Internet Protocol) networks.

- **Security** has six not-so-easy pieces: policy, architecture, authentication, authorization, administration and recovery – and they’re expensive. Get help here if you don’t have the horses in-house to get the job done – and worry about privacy and its relationship with personalization and customization.

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**What Do You Know?**

Hope you enjoyed the business discussion in Chapter III. We’ll build on it here in some important ways. Hopefully, you’ll start to see some major connections between collaborative business and integrated technology and therefore begin to embrace the whole business technology convergence philosophy (there’s Kool Aid for the skeptical). The inter-connections between business and technology are inescapable. If you want to cross-sell, for example, you have to have a reliable relational database management system and data and applications integration technology. If you want to personalize and customize, you need lots of data technology and the inference models to “know” what individuals want. And if you want to enable your supply chain, you need a set of accepted standards and procurement software to make it all work. Again, make sure that the processes and discipline exist to get the most out of this stuff. If they don’t, you’ll become a Gartner statistic.

We’re going to talk about the entire range of technologies in this session. Of course you probably already know about lots of them. No doubt you’ve paid
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