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FROM THE CIO POINT OF VIEW: THE “IT DOESN’T MATTER” DEBATE

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EDITOR’S FOREWORD

This article differs from all the articles CAIS published previously in that it is a debate on the nature of IT written by practitioners from three different points of view. It deals with *IT Doesn’t Matter*, a polemic written by Nicholas Carr, then editor of the Harvard Business Review in which he argued that the days when IT offered strategic advantage are long since gone and that managers therefore should undertake a different approach to IT. The paper, obviously, became notorious in the IS community.

On December 3, 2003, the Southern California Chapter of the Society for Information Management, at its regular meeting invited three of its members with long experience as chief information officers to debate the issue. The title of the meeting was: “*I.T. Doesn’t Matter or Does It? How to Improve the Value and Perception of I.T.*” The three debaters were assigned a position to argue: favorable to Carr (Laskey), neutral (DeJarnett), and unfavorable to Carr (Trainor). Edited versions of their remarks are presented below.

Keywords: value of IT, perception of IT, role of IT, Nicholas Carr, I.T. Doesn’t Matter, IT Does Matter, contrarian point-of-view, strategic advantage, vanishing advantage of I.T., ubiquity, management of technology

I. MAKING SENSE OF THE IT DOESN’T MATTER DEBATE

by Robert Laskey

INTRODUCTION

Perhaps too much has been written about the debate surrounding Nicholas Carr's [2003] article, *IT Doesn’t Matter*, in the Harvard Business Review. In lieu of a debate, what management needs now are some answers on how to measure IT value and how to develop an appropriate investment strategy for the IT function. Many believe that for too long the IT function went

without a rational, effective investment strategy. Boiled down that is the net, net of the Carr debate.

Turning back to the debate itself, in the main, each position centers on an individual's perspective and actual experience with the IT function. Simply put, an individual opinion is in the eye of the beholder. Many people with bad IT experiences are aggressively in the pro-Carr camp. Others have an opposite experience and reaction. For many, the debate can trigger an emotional rather than a rational response.

Personally, I have seen almost 40 years of IT history elapse. Certainly this experience does not constitute totality but it is enough to weigh in. This individual perspective, involving both positive and negative experiences, was shaped by experiences in three roles. Initially as a CIO for a Fortune 100 and then, for a Fortune 25 companies. Second, as a Big-4 Partner and consultant to IT and general management with experience with over 100 clients. Last, as a non-IT executive who was critically dependent on IT performance on multiple occasions.

At the Southern California chapter of the Society of Information Management (SCSIM), the panel was organized from a perspective of black hat, white hat and grey hat. My draw for the event was the black hat, speaking from the IT doesn't matter or pro-Carr camp. After some soul searching and reflection, I found the role easier to accept than I initially believed possible.

This article is based in part on the SCSIM panel but is augmented by the reaction by others, largely CIOs at the event, shared in private at the conclusion of the chapter meeting. What is the appropriate way to deal with the issues raised in the Carr debate? Hopefully, this article takes some positive steps to deal with the debate premises in a constructive manner.

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF, PERHAPS IT SHOULD AGAIN

In *IT Doesn't Matter*, the Carr position, as pointed out in Larry DeJarnett's article (which follows this one) is that scarcity governs whether a resource is truly strategic. Carr's perception is that IT is a commodity, thus making it non-strategic by my definition. A historical view puts Carr's premise into perspective. From the beginning and into the mid-to-late 1990's IT uniqueness was pervasive because most systems were either custom or significantly modified application packages. The era of competitive advantage systems arose with firms such as Merrill Lynch, American Airlines and American Hospital Supply. They broke away from the back-office notion of data processing and moved into the forefront with customer-centric applications, which were deemed to be strategic at the time.

The deployment of proprietary, semi- and totally custom applications was the rule. For historical purposes, most IT observers would concede that the majority of packaged application systems installed throughout this timeframe were modified significantly. Modification was required because the packaged application software was relatively thin on features and thinner yet in its ability to adapt for industries and unique business processes. The latest versions of packaged applications are much improved and hence "tweaked" significantly less. They are often used right out of the box because they can be tuned via templates or industry specific versions.

In accordance with Carr's premise, today's strategic system, by definition, must be customized to make it more than a commodity. Yet, very few firms, or CIOs, are either inclined or can justify the ROI to undertake large-scale customization efforts. Thus, the Carr argument is obviously true if an enterprise requires no strategic (or so-called competitive advantage) systems. The question is whether a specific enterprise fits that model.

If back-office systems are a commodity, would the world care? If customer-facing systems are a commodity, did the firm miss the boat? The real issue is how well are customers being served. Many managers believe that good is "good enough." The real question is does it matter to your customers?

Perhaps it is time for history to repeat itself or at least be revisited. If, in fact, customers see no value in your systems (perhaps that is the case) then you must be being strategic in some other manner; for example through branding or superb customer service. Are these areas of the enterprise that can be enhanced through the deployment of strategic systems? A prudent CIO should work with the executive team to fully understand the needs of the customer base before abandoning the notion of no strategic value. Recognize that a CIO may already understand the situation, but they may lack the necessary schmoozing skills to build consensus and confidence with their peer executives.

Perhaps this is the appropriate first step response to the "IT is commodity" premise of the Carr debate. Some CIOs stealthily believe that IT is not a commodity but do not believe that it is politically correct to voice the opinion to the rest of the enterprise. Incidentally, presenting an anti-Carr position is an important step to assist in determining the value of IT to the enterprise.

WALK IN A USER'S SHOES BEFORE RUNNING OFF

Incredibly, most IT staff members still lack significant real user experience and perspective. Having sat in the user executive chair and dealt with IT management and staff the first word that comes to mind is frustration. The second word is insensitivity. IT is perceived by many non-managers as techno-centric with IT (not business) function-centered priorities.

Perhaps the best investment that a CIO can make is in training. Not additional training by taking another technical course but rather a short-to-medium stint working in a user function directly for a user manager. A short-term transfer of key IT staff members to a user function will do wonders for both attitude and performance. While desirable, certainly not every member of the IT staff need be "sensitized" but it makes sense for key general and project managers (and key technical team members) to take a multi-day stint in a user function area. A rental company client had a policy that every member of the IT development team staff should spend several days behind the rental desk to help them understand the issues of dealing with customer situations. The same was true of a restaurant / hospitality client. Personally, I would recommend 2 to 4 weeks.

IT credibility is critically low now. Investing in building a bridge with a user is an excellent investment strategy and also a powerful response to the Carr debate premise.

IT VALUE, THE KEY TO FINDING AN INVESTMENT LEVEL

The second major premise of the Carr debate is that too much investment was and is being made in the IT function. His premise leads him to conclude that the CIO should focus on risks not on competitive advantage. Carr's premise is that the greatest potential IT risk is overspending, thus putting the enterprise at a cost disadvantage.

It is interesting to retreat back to IT history. For decades, the great CIO issue was how to obtain more budget for the ever-growing user demands for IT. The investment boom peaked with the Y2K spending binge. This event also left a bad taste within the user management because many of their investment needs were postponed or dropped.

The real issue revolves around trying to measure the value of IT to the business. How much spending is enough? This question is difficult to address in the specific because each business circumstance is different. Most CIOs will attest that there is no easy answer to this question. (Is there a definitive one, presented by anyone, that can be applied in general)? Most long-tenured CIOs lean toward a politically developed solution. Best practice involves marketing, yes that M word, each project or major infrastructure area on its own merits (ROI or otherwise) to develop a consensus prior to the budget battles. Building consensus and establishing allies is a long-standing traditional approach to working effectively within an enterprise. Long tenured CIOs are masters at the process. Using this approach is much more effective than laying the total budget coldly on the table of the budget committee and walking away.

The second, tried and true method is picking your battle. Knowing when to hold or fold is another lesson learned. This approach goes hand and hand with the consensus building approach.

Recognizing that some readers might be looking for the silver bullet to this issue, this article is sure to disappoint. But the real answer lies in the cultural / political realm not a formula. As Larry DeJarnett points out in his paper below, perception is everything. Measuring IT value is a way of business thinking not a methodology¹.

IT LOST CREDIBILITY... CAN IT REBOUND?

It is clear that IT lost credibility and momentum since its fall from grace in the dot.bomb and Y2K aftermath. Some CIOs were impacted much more by IT fallout than others. The well-positioned CIO, one with a perceived value proposition in place with constituents, appears to be faring better than those who did not solidify alliances within the enterprise.

Is there still time to act? Again, there is no general answer, but acting now should be a priority. Being proactive is always a solid general principle when you are or may be under a microscope. The lessons learned of the long-tenured CIO are always a good place to start.

II. THE GREAT DEBATE: DOES I.T. REALLY MATTER?

By Larry DeJarnett

FOREWORD

Whining about whether I.T. *really* matters is not constructive – and too many I.T. professionals are spending too much time whining about this subject! Healthy debate, however, **can be** constructive, healthy, and useful. A contrarian perspective can help I.T. professionals zero in on more substantive issues and barriers to I.T. success, and provides valuable insight on how those issues/barriers may be addressed. This article, addressed to practicing I.T. professionals, offers a “point-of-view” from a 5-career professional, whose work experience includes tours in higher education, a Fortune 5 Company, conglomerate mergers & acquisitions, large-scale management consulting, and individual coaching/advisory services.

INTRODUCTION

We all heard and read about memorable debates: Clay vs. Calhoun, Lincoln vs. Douglas; Kennedy vs. Nixon. To this list of historical notables, information technology professionals now add their own championship debate – Carr vs. Almost Everybody [who has an opinion about IT]. Panels are forming to elaborate, refute, or assassinate (at least verbally); Letters-to-the-editor mailboxes are overflowing – endorsing heartily or attacking with vehemence.

Nicholas Carr's [2003] *Harvard Business Review* (HBR) article, *IT Doesn't Matter*, spawned more letters to the editor, rebuttals, attacks, endorsements, and other communications than anything I can recall in IT. One pundit, perhaps with tongue in cheek, characterized a good deal of the response to *IT Doesn't Matter*, as “*It does, tooooo!*”

At this point, let's be sure we have the credentials straight. Nicholas Carr is *not* a nobody trying to create a bit of sensational recognition. At the time of his article, he was HBR's editor-at-large.

¹ I would be remiss if I did not mention the SCSIM sponsored "Measuring the Impact of IT" survey by the PRISMA Impact Group that is based on comparative measurements of perceptions. This survey is a benchmark study of participating SCSIM chapter members. The preliminary results appeared promising when presented in December 2003, but additional data collection is needed to validate the results. The survey had not been released as of mid-February 2004. They will appear in [Prism Group, 2004].

He also writes extensively for the *Financial Times*, for *Business 2.0*, and, when it was publishing, the *Industry Standard*.

Credentials notwithstanding, as a long time IT professional (or at least closely associated with many top-notch IT professionals), it would be all too easy for me to just join in the piling-on and name-calling. BUT, wait! Several years ago, a wise Editor called the attention of this (then) rookie columnist to the power of a pithy title, especially if it suggests a contrarian point of view. "There is no finer hook, to snare a reader," he said. "Then, you reel him/her in. They will be powerless to skip-over such an article."

My years in management consulting reinforced this lesson about the power of the contrarian point of view. It is a great technique to grab peoples' attention and get them to look differently at a subject – IF, you can get them to think beyond a "knee-jerk" reaction to something they initially think is nothing but outrageous. A close observer will note that initial responses to a contrarian position often are simplistic and lacking in any real content, as well. The frequency of the "*it does too*" responses to Carr's "*IT Doesn't Matter*" suggests he played that contrarian card very well.

TO MATTER OR NOT (NO WHINING ALLOWED)

We will not try to produce a *Reader's Digest* version of Carr's article here, but it may be useful to keep in mind some of the points he made – first, for the purpose of understanding why you may disagree, and second, so you might reconsider the merits of some of his points.

In *IT Doesn't Matter*, Carr challenges whether IT is or ever was strategic, suggesting instead that what makes a resource truly strategic is its scarcity. He argues that the ubiquity of IT today is not strength, but rather, means that everybody can access virtually any and all technology equally. Ergo, all can do the same thing with the technology, and no unique, strategic advantage is possible. Beyond his "vanishing advantage of IT", Carr highlights what he calls the "growing commoditization of IT", and the need for companies to "move from offense to defense in their use of IT". Hmmm!

You may think, dear readers, that this is all just so much hokum. Who in their right mind would believe such things? We all know better – of course! But let's look at Carr's position from the "other side". Remember, we all learned long ago that perception is reality.

Carr's new rules for IT management are a welcome mantra to business executives who *perceive* they have been burned by any (or all) of several IT ventures. It does not matter whether such "ventures" were foisted upon senior management by evil CIOs, devious consultants, or other technophobes. In fact, it does not matter if they were a result of executive envy (of a competitor), or an executive "emotional" decision. Carr's new rules find many welcoming ears, and are not without merit in today's environment. Consider how your boss would react if you proposed going forward with these rules, as outlined by Carr, for IT:

- **Spend less** – studies show that companies with the biggest IT investment rarely post the best financial results. [That is what Carr says, and your boss probably will be easily persuaded.]
- **Follow, don't lead** – you'll get more for your money and decrease your risk of rapid obsolescence. Surely this is music-to-the-ears of many CEOs.
- **Focus on vulnerabilities, not opportunities** – it's [hard] to gain a competitive advantage [with] distinctive use of a mature infrastructural technology; ceding control of applications and networks to vendors and third parties will [cause threats to proliferate]. Prepare for technical glitches, outages, and security breaches. CEOs, whether IT knowledgeable or not, can easily be persuaded to such points of view.

These rules can make a lot of sense for many. All of us know one or more examples that can validate Carr's "rules". How would you expect your boss to respond?

You have seen other reactions, I am sure. Many lampooned Carr. Some cancelled their subscriptions to HBR. Hundreds, maybe thousands of letters to the editor were written – many to publications other than HBR. When we IT-types get our dander up, we will use any vehicle to have our say. Editors and columnists of many leading IS publications responded, as well. In my experience, the short version often was . . . “foul” . . . “no way”.

Make no mistake. I, too, disagree with a number of Carr’s points – but not all.

One of the most interesting – and more balanced – rebuttals (for me) came from Michael Schrage [2003], Co-Director of MIT Media Lab’s eMarkets Initiative in his, *Why IT Really Does Matter* published in CIO Magazine. August 1, 2003.

YES . . . IT DOES MATTER . . . BECAUSE . . .

No, this is not about an MIT guy taking shots at a Harvard guy. Rather, from all the materials I read and heard on this subject (and a lot has been written and said), Schrage makes a better case in writing for why IT does matter. I would dearly love to see Carr and Schrage on the same stage together – debating. That could be one for the ages (the IT ages, at least).

“It’s all about the execution”, Schrage says. Many colleagues – and I – agree. The issue is not technology. Rather, it is the management of technology. This is an interesting point of commonality between the two authors. Carr, in his opening paragraph says, “The way you approach IT investment and management [emphasis added is mine] will need to change dramatically.” Unfortunately, Carr never again really addresses the management issue.

Early on, Schrage acknowledges that Carr “struck a nerve (as well as a funny bone)”. As noted above, however, Schrage is emphatic: it is not the ubiquitous technology that differentiates a business strategically or otherwise. Instead, in his opinion, it is how a business *manages* their ubiquitous technology.

Following in the model of “technology does not matter because of its ubiquity”, Schrage provides several illustrations of similar construct – and he finds all equally unreasonable. For example, he says: the same inputs of capital (with all other things being equal) would not produce the same results for a FedEx, DHL, or UPS; a Nike, Reebok, or Addidas; or American Airlines, Southwest Airlines, or Jet Blue. Capital is as ubiquitous as technology, so he wonders, would Carr and HBR publish an article entitled “Capital Doesn’t Matter”? He makes similar comparisons with people (talent pool resources) – again emphasizing that the same “commodity” resource will not product the same result in different places. It is the management and the environment they create that allow the powerful resources (technology, capital, people, or whatever) to make a difference.

In the end, though, Schrage acknowledges the accuracy of Carr’s statement that too many businesses spent too much money on IT, with far too little to show for it. He thinks that reinforces his *management* point, too.

Your own biases will probably lead you to conclude which is most correct. You can choose either road, either position. I am reminded of Peter Drucker’s admonition about technology. To paraphrase . . . “There is no specific road or final destination; the value is in the journey”.

CONCLUSION

Go back and read both Carr and Schrage. Read what others have said – but read carefully, with a dispassionate mind and not a purely emotional mind. If nothing else, remember Murphy’s Law – “If anything can go wrong, it will.” That could suggest your boss will be most likely to read and believe the position you like least – i.e. *IT Doesn’t Matter!* So this may be a good time to remember the Boy Scout training and motto. Be Prepared!

III. DO WE STILL MATTER?

By H. Edgar Trainor

THE HBR CHALLENGE

In the May 2003 issue of *Harvard Business Review*, Nicholas G. Carr, then editor, wrote an article titled "Does IT Still Matter?" [Carr, 2003] that stirred debate across the IS community. His arguments were as follows:

- Assumption: As IT's potency and ubiquity increased, so did its strategic value
- Mistake: Competitiveness comes from scarcity, not ubiquity
- Conclusion: IT is affordable and accessible to everyone and therefore no longer offers strategic advantage to anyone.

In short, Carr argues that IT became a commodity.

Following this line of reasoning, Carr concluded that firms should avoid over-investing in IT. His logic is:

- Because IT is ubiquitous, we must focus on its risks more than its potential strategic advantage
- The Internet accelerated the commoditization of IT by providing a perfect delivery channel for generic applications
- The greatest IT risk is overspending, putting a company at a cost disadvantage.

Based on this logic, Carr advises companies to move from offense to defense in IS. Specifically, he recommends that firms should:

- Spend less by separating essential investments from discretionary, unnecessary or counterproductive ones.
- Explore simple, cheap alternatives and eliminate waste.
- Follow, rather than lead. Delay IT investments to cut costs and decrease risk significantly
- Focus on risks, not opportunities. Prepare for potential disruptions and not on deploying IT in radical new ways.

THE CIO MAGAZINE CHALLENGE

Writing in the October 1, 2003 issue of CIO Magazine, Stephanie Overby talked about *The Incredible Shrinking CIO* [Overby 2003]. Her article talked in terms of dumbing down CIO Role. She points out that the percent of CIOs reporting to CFOs doubled in the previous year. CIO compensation decreased 16% from 2001 to 2003 while IT spending continued to be flat or in decline. Outsourcing and shrink-wrapped technology strategies are of increasing interest to CEO's. Seemingly, the CIO, who moved from the back room to the board room, is moving to the back room.

RELATED QUESTIONS AND THE REAL QUESTION

These and similar articles raise some related questions for CIOs:

- How do I determine IT priorities and proactively manage stockholder expectations within an environment of diminishing budgets?
- How do I allocate IT resources to satisfy unbounded demand for IT services?
- How do I maintain consistent operations while focusing IT resources on high value, high growth initiatives that enable the business strategy?

Both the articles and the questions boil down to the real question that must be resolved:

What is the value of IT?

To make that judgment, you need to:

- Measure the value
- Communicate the value
- Achieve the value

WHAT IS THE VALUE OF IT?

Let's begin by considering whether the value of IT is a new question.

In 1988, Information Economics tried to measure and justify the value of IT investments. Research on the issue expanded the concept of value beyond ROI (even though ROI is still fashionable today) to:

- Enhanced ROI
- Strategic match
- Competitive advantage
- Management information
- Competitive response
- Strategic IT architecture

That is, Information Economics attempted to quantify intangible benefits and risks. More recent literature on the question of value continued to examine this issue. Here are some of the more recent viewpoints being expressed.

- *Gartner Group: "IT Effectiveness versus IT Efficiency"*

IT effectiveness is qualitative, thus difficult to measure whereas IT efficiency is measured through cost comparisons

- *Information Week: "The Technology/Customer Disconnect"*

Research found no discernable link between the level of IT investment and customer satisfaction. The need to demonstrate the connection between IT spending and business results is critical. Yet there is a disconnect between IT and line managers about IT's role and potential contributions. Furthermore, IT infrastructures are under leveraged.

- *CFO.com: "RIO: Results Often Immeasurable"*

ROI analysis seemed like a panacea for the cost/complexities of IT projects. However, ROI is now morphing into the central question for executives involved in IT strategy: the need to create a solid framework in which IT spending can be analyzed and capital deployed.

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- *CIO Magazine: "Applying EVA to IT"*

Economic Value Analysis (EVA) subjects every investment to an intrnal cost-of-capital charge. EVA's classic problem is the difficulty of quantifying returns from IT investments. The benefit, however, is that EVA speaks the language of the CFO and can help the CIO who is struggling with demonstrating the value of IT Investments.

- *Meta Group: "Return on Value"*

ROI studies do not result in successful funding approvals. The results of ROI studies of IT and other investments are open to credibility issues. Return on Value (ROV) may be more effective too because:

- It links IT performance measures to the company's specific strategic goals and missions such as increase in market share.
- It provides means to measure economic benefits.
- It creates observable links to line-of-business defined metrics and benefits.

- *Giga Information Group "Measure Business Value Creted by IT Spending"*

The problem is not ROI, it is measurement and communications. In their analysis, they argue that the management view is that little IT spending actually creates any new business value. They found that only a quarter of all IT projects attempt to create new value, and of that quarter, only a third are successful. This finding contributes to management's view that little IT spending creates value.

THE INFORMATION/TECHNOLOGY GAP

The gap between the CEO and the CIO is illustrated in the following figure.

Source: SIM Advanced Practices Council

- The CEO wants high business performance from information use. She/he talks about people being able to use good information to do business.

- The CIO wants good business results. However, she/he attempts to achieve them through technology, often leaving people's information management and behaviors for the business units to address.

The result is confusion in language and mindsets.

THE GOOD POINTS

Carr and the other authors make some good points:

- Explore simple and cheap alternatives; reduce risk; eliminate waste; spend less; outsource commodity functions, and more
- Improve delivery of IT projects to meet promises of time, cost and benefits.
- Find better ways to measure the value of IT investments
- Improve communications with senior management.

Who can argue that there is not room for improvement? Yet, as we review the list, we see that all of these points have been in the basic charge to IT managers from the beginning.

THE MISSING POINTS

By highlighting only the points that buttress their argument, Carr and others miss some important points.

1. IT value comes from innovations in business practices. Examples include knowledge management, business process improvement, customer relationship management, performance management to name a few.
2. IT advantages arise from *people*, not IT. Although innovations and new ideas are enabled by IT, the ideas themselves are generated by people.
3. IT risks exceed advantages (which is Carr's contention) only if the risks are not well understood and/or managed.

In summary, IT-enabled changes occur in each of our businesses and we must embrace the changes while managing the risks.

EXAMPLE: IT ENABLED CHANGE CREATES IMPORTANT NEW OPPORTUNITIES IN THE ENTERTAINMENT BUSINESS

I've now spent many years in the entertainment business working for a major film producer and so have been living and breathing the Entertainment Production Value Chain. As shown in Figure 2, both current and future opportunities exist all along the chain.

It should also be noted that IT-enabled change also creates great business risks in the industry because it makes piracy much easier. Here are some of the considerations.

- Broadband penetration and music downloading predict video downloading.
- 5% of online consumers already downloaded movies. 86% of these consumers subscribe to broadband on the Internet. Similarly, 86% of consumers who have downloaded movies also downloaded music.

Source: McClellan Associates analysis

Figure 2. The Education Production Value Chain

- Broadband is steadily penetrating the U.S. market

The percentage of households with broadband was 15% in 2002, but is expected to increase to 50% by 2007. And, as the data above shows, U.S. broadband users are at least four times more likely to download videos than narrowband users.

- Ease of video downloading will improve quickly, given historical trends for compression, storage, encoding, and home broadband speed. Thus, in 2004 it takes less time to download a standard definition movie than to watch it. The same will be true by 2007 for a high definition movie. Given the increase in storage capacity, by 2006 a single removable disk will be able to store 50 high definition movies or 1200 standard definition sitcoms.

In the example of the entertainment industry, IT does indeed matter. The entertainment industry cannot stop the march of technology. Rather, it must adapt to the changes that technology brings by figuring out what to do and how to do it. The firms that do, will be the ones that survive.

BOTTOM LINE: THIS DOESN'T LOOK LIKE A COMMODITY TO ME!

Our businesses continue to change in ways we could not imagine a short time ago. As in the entertainment industry, IT in non-traditional forms is at the heart of much of the change. IT does not create either opportunities or risks. These come from innovation. The value comes from people and their ideas, and those are not commodities.

Editor's Note: This article is based on a debate held on December 3, 2003. It was published on April 30, 2004.

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Robert Laskey is CEO of Revelation 360, a consulting company directed to business and technology clients. He is a founding member of the Southern California Chapter of the Society for Information Management (SCSIM). He has served on the SCSIM board in numerous capacities, including past Chairperson. He has had a multi-faceted career in industry, consulting and education. During his career, he has served as CIO for a Fortune 25 and a Fortune 100 company. His consulting career spanned more than 15 years including retiring as a National Partner for KPMG Consulting. After retiring from KPMG he served as SVP eCommerce for an internet venture. He now divides his time between consulting, volunteer work, and teaching as an adjunct professor. He serves as a member of the Board of Trustees for Goodwill Industries – Long Beach and South Bay. His BS and MBA are from UCLA; he completed doctoral coursework at the University of Southern California.

Ed Trainor is Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer for Paramount Pictures. He has responsibility for the development, application and management of information technology across Paramount's Motion Picture, Television, Home Video, Consumer Products and Studio business units. Ed held similar positions with the Southern California Gas Co., Flying Tigers and Amtrak prior to joining Paramount in 1994,

Ed has for many years been active in the Society for Information Management (SIM), the premier professional association for senior I.T. leaders. He has held several leadership positions on the Executive Committee of SIM's Southern California Chapter and is a past-Chairperson of the Chapter as well as the past national President of SIM.

Ed is co-author of two books: *Information Economics* and *Information Strategy and Economics* (Trainor, Parker and Benson, Prentice-Hall, 1988 and 1989).

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