



**CIO Master Series Roundtable  
“The CIO in Transition”**

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**Highlights**

**Toronto, May 31, 2012**



## Master Series Roundtable Highlights

### “The CIO in Transition”

Toronto, May 31

Fourteen CIOs gathered in Toronto at the end of May for a candid discussion around the future of the profession. The latest in The IT Media Group’s *CIO Master Series Roundtables* focussed on the theme “*The CIO in Transition*”.

The event, sponsored by Hewlett-Packard (Canada) Co., was attended by IT leaders from large and mid-sized firms in a variety of sectors, including financial, retail, transportation and the public sector. It prompted a wide variety of opinions on how the role of CIO is changing, and how CIOs themselves can proactively take control of their own fate within the organization.

“This is an especially challenging time for CIOs,” said roundtable moderator John Pickett. “Not only must they cope with rapidly changing technology and increasingly complex IT environments, they must also meet the demands of the business to be more nimble and more open to the use of third party apps and consumer devices. They’re also charged with boosting IT’s contribution to business value while holding the line on already frugal budgets.”

These and many other factors figured into the discussion amongst the 14 roundtable attendees. What follows are highlights from their conversation around how these factors are impacting and reshaping the role of the CIO.

## ROUNDTABLE HIGHLIGHTS

### THE CIO AS A BUSINESS LEADER

One theme that resonated throughout the roundtable was the emergence of the CIO as a business leader, not just an IT leader. As one attendee noted, the CIO is starting to become “the point of the spear”, with IT actually leading some internal business initiatives, not merely supporting them. Said another, “Our company, not just within Canada but also at a North American and global level, is really looking to see where that leadership lives; and does it live not just within IT but also in IT owning operational functions? Some attendees thought that references to “IT and the business” were outdated; the reality for today’s CIOs is that ‘they are the business.’

### EVOLUTION OF THE CIO

As new responsibilities fall to the CIO, the job itself is changing. In some organizations, the CIO function is evolving beyond the traditional tasks of information management and ‘keeping the lights on’. Said one attendee, “The I in CIO is morphing from Information to Innovation.

Management are looking for innovation beyond technology. They look at trends like social media and they want to know how they can play. The important thing is are you getting any revenue from it? Is it driving impressions? Is it changing perception? That's where they're looking to the CIO to provide thought leadership.”

## TAKING THE MEASURE OF IT

CIOs that aspire to be business leaders need to demonstrate the contribution of IT to the business. Almost all attendees indicated that they are using some form of formal KPI scorecarding to measure IT performance. “I measure my organization around putting more on the bottom line than we cost every year. We use that as a benchmark,” said one attendee. “I'm not looking necessarily to be a profit center but I absolutely want to put more on the bottom line, and we demonstrate that by scorecarding.”

## CRITICAL DATA ISSUES

Several CIOs expressed a concern around the security of corporate data, especially in view of the fact that it is being put on devices that users can carry in their pockets, or flowing out into public domains where it is only secured with an ID and password. Concern was expressed that poorly protected data in the public domain undermines even the most rigorous internal security measures. None of the roundtable CIOs had found a satisfactory solution to the problem.

Another issue around control of data is the cloud. Cloud-base solutions are not going to go away, noted one attendee. “You can ignore them, but your successors will be trying to pull them back to IT 20 years from now. I'd rather not be a victim of it. I'd rather try to help the enablement of it but in more of a safe and secure way.”

## NOT SO SAVVY USERS

The lack of real technology knowledge by end users is another challenge impacting the role of the CIO. Though many are good users of technology, they often don't understand basic methodologies, architectures, and designs, and they are creating a lot of things that don't work. They don't understand how all the pieces fit together in the back end. Attendees agreed that this is causing problems for IT and placing a high value on technical and solutions architects.

## RAPID PACE OF CHANGE & INNOVATION

Though innovation can be a good thing, the speed of technology change and the flood of innovation is creating problems for CIOs and corporate IT departments. Said one attendee, “there are so many new models and new capabilities to put into our enterprise that I don't know

where to begin. At the same time, I have not seen a real fundamental shift in change methodology – how you take an organization that's used to doing something one way and evolve it to a completely new way? Some of those things take time and I haven't found technologies that accelerate our implementation ability.”

## **ABOUT CIO MASTER SERIES ROUNDTABLES**

*With continued strong support for our CIO Master Series roundtables, The IT Media Group plans to host them regularly in Toronto, beginning this fall. Following successful roundtables in Vancouver and Calgary this spring, we are also making regular stops in those cities in the coming year. Plans are in the works to take ITMG events to other cities across Canada in the coming year.*

*CIO Master Series events are thought-provoking forums designed to enable CIOs and other senior IT executives to voice their opinions, share hands-on knowledge and brainstorm new ideas in a relaxed and private setting. They are free for senior Canadian IT executives in both the private and public sector. For more information, please contact [info@theITmediagroup.com](mailto:info@theITmediagroup.com).*

## **ABOUT THE IT MEDIA GROUP**

*The IT Media Group serves the Canadian IT management community by creating great resources for CIOs and producing events that enable true IT executive peers to share knowledge, opinions and best practices. Based in Toronto, ITMG's leadership team includes three of Canada's top IT communications professionals. John Pickett and Dave Carey are two of the country's best known and longest serving publishing personalities focused on IT management. Nasheen Liu brings a wealth of first-tier IT marketing savvy to ITMG's vendor relations portfolio. For more information, please visit [www.theITmediagroup.com](http://www.theITmediagroup.com).*