

The Power of Convergence

Become a better leader by converging business and technology.

UNIFYING THE MANAGEMENT of business and technology will sooner or later involve everyone in the organization, from the chairman of the board to the newest hire on the project team. It is not a temporary activity assigned to a committee; it is a new way of doing business. Convergence requires new roles and responsibilities, as well as a new mindset and new skills.

In converged companies, business-unit and technology leaders operate almost interchangeably: Every manager is accountable for some business-related aspect of technology, whether it's product design, operations or customer service. Next-generation leaders have mastered the skills needed to articulate their business objectives and then use technology to achieve those objectives.

One sign of a converged company is that the people making decisions on business and technology are the same people — they are conversant in both. They have an understanding of the business mission and an appreciation for the technologies that can make it happen.

Don't discard and replace everything that makes your company what it is; improve and sharpen what is in place and **extend your strengths.**

Step back for a moment from your particular duties and look at your organization as an information gathering and disseminating organism. Do you have the right stuff for convergence management? What is the right stuff? You already have certain tools available to you — information and employee incentives, for example. And you have in place some of the necessities, such as decision-making processes and collaborative groups.

So, although these will change and assume new roles and responsibilities, you are not starting from scratch. The path has been marked ahead of you.

Here are the critical steps you and your organization will need to take:

- Make sure upper management values the impact that technology has on your business, and that you have true upper-management support for the initiative.
- Work from a road map. Be thorough and thoughtful. Let your management know how you wish to proceed, how long it will take and what it will feel like at each milestone.
- Focus initially on the acknowledged point of greatest pain — whether it be governance and investment manage-



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- Make sure your focus broadens to include all areas within the management of business and technology to ensure they all arrive at the same location at the same time.

These are the hallmarks of a converged organization. By applying these lessons and interpreting them through the lens of your own business,

your organization can realize the benefits of being a converged enterprise. As an effective technology leader, your direction can lead to such transformation.

Maturing in convergence management is a big job, and it takes time. However, the payback can begin almost immediately, given the huge disconnect in so many firms.

Doing nothing is not an option. The changes sweeping over corporations and other organizations will not stop because they make us uncomfortable. The only way to win is to get ahead of these changes and to manage them in your favor. You can't do that today unless your business and technology are united as one. **[BT]**

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