

Rust Report

News and views of the action in Australasia's IT sector this week

April 7, 2006

THE RUST BUCKET

Into the unknown

BOARD MEMBERS and senior executives these days have to deal more consistently and more carefully than ever before with matters of governance, risk management, and compliance. These requirements for sustained compliance are also driving the need for a new culture in ICT that requires new roles, terminology, and skill-sets for virtually every individual in the ICT department.

For almost a decade major investments in infrastructure have fallen by the wayside as funds flowed into ERP, CRM, and Internet applications. With today's emphasis moving towards compliance issues, the focus has shifted to the realisation that what is missing in many cases is still the data. Data quality, governance, security, and access are all issues that are discussed at different levels.

It's not a surprise that over the past two weeks several vendors have announced the release of new products and services in Australia. And it's easy to see how this activity has also attracted the attention of more ICT consultants, service providers and network and security players all with solutions and/or skills.

Just as business processes are key to the success of organisations, defining the security processes are key to securing businesses.

The huge quantity of lost data regularly makes headline news. The number of cases of lost laptops, hard drives, portable devices, plus all the back-up foul-ups quickly hit the mainstream news. Talk to taxi drivers and you'll hear many stories of technologies that were left behind. On top of that we hear of computers stolen from government departments and businesses with both large and small disk drives intact, and computers sold with sensitive data not removed. There are many examples of corporate malpractices, identity theft incidences, and privacy violations . . . it just goes on and on. It's no surprise that vendors are trying to jump on this bandwagon opportunity.

Like it or not we are all now in an era of regulations and we all have to learn to live with them. Hopefully, having to comply with the regulations will also provide opportunities to improve business processes, which will eventually lead to better-run organisations.

All of this will occur even though there are limited budgets and the need to do more with less, requiring ICT departments to take a closer look at their purchases and operating expenses.

Managing the state of the future corporate infrastructure is going to be more about ensuring systems security and availability, proactive protection and disaster prevention, policy and licence compliance, disaster recovery, and more. These days in compliance the old giveaway "I didn't know about it" will not fly anymore. It will be challenging for many, and there will always be the need to plan for the unknown.

— Len Rust RustOz@bigpond.com.au

Microsoft in cahoots with Feds on security

Microsoft has been called up to help the Australian Government tackle the security of the country's communications infrastructure and the government's IT systems. Under the terms of the Security Co-operation Program, Microsoft will help the government in activities like computer incident response, attack mitigation, and "citizen outreach", explained Steve Vamos, managing director of Microsoft Australia.

"The goal of the SCP is to help governments around the world address threats to national security, economic strength, and public safety more efficiently and effectively through co-operative projects and information-sharing with Microsoft," Vamos added.

The agreement covers all federal departments and agencies and will be co-ordinated by the Defence Signals Directorate. State and territory governments will be able to participate.

The government had earlier entered a security pact with the software developer when it signed on to Microsoft's Government Security Program in 2003.

DiData gets among the govt deals

Dimension Data has flown high in April after being selected to supply and support network equipment for Centrelink's data network redesign project, and winning a contract to provide managed network services to the South Australian Government for three years. Each of the contracts is valued at about \$A40 million.

Steve Nola, CEO of Dimension Data, acknowledged that the Centrelink win was a "significant" one. "Centrelink is one of the largest IT users in this country," he said. The company will provide core routing and switching, encryption, and public key infrastructure for Centrelink's IP converged network. Equipment will be sourced from Cisco Systems, Senetas, and RSA Security. www.didata.com.au

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INSIDER EDITION

Sudan hospitals pick Aussie tech

Sydney healthcare systems developer IBA Health has won a \$A3.7 million contract to supply and install its systems at 10 hospitals and 10 health centres in Sudan. Under the terms of the contract with the Sudanese Ministry of Health, IBA will participate in a program that seeks to revitalise the country's 334 hospitals and strengthen the delivery capability of more than 950 primary care clinics, explained Steve Garrington, CEO of IBA Health. The initial agreement covers a pilot program, but subsequent phases will lead to the roll-out of the software at other hospitals, clinics, and healthcare facilities, Garrington added. www.ibatech.com

Canadian hospitals take MatrixView

MatrixView, the ASX-listed Singaporean developer of the Adaptive Binary Optimisation (ABO) compression technology, has been selected to provide an echocardiography management system to three remote clinics in Toronto, Canada. The ABO technology at the heart of the MatrixView EchoPACStream system allows the efficient transmission of high-quality images even in low-bandwidth environments, explained Ravi Govindan, CEO of MatrixView.

"With the number of worldwide cardiology procedures increasing at 20 per cent per annum, many hospitals are starting to exploit enterprise cardiology Picture Archive and Communication Systems to deliver high quality healthcare services to patients in remote locations," Govindan added. www.matrixview.com

Argus scores sale to NSW clinics

Identity management specialist Argus Solutions has been selected to provide its MethaDose drug dispensing system to two drug treatment clinics in Sydney. The order followed an extensive valuation by the NSW Department of Health and its Centre of Drug and Alcohol. Bruce Lyman, CEO of Argus, said the deal is significant for the company. "For Argus it marks the beginning of what is expected to be a state-wide roll-out across more than 70 clinics," he explained. www.argus-solutions.com

Hyro refreshes Vic Govt Web site

Digital services provider Hyro has been selected to undertake an update of the Victorian Government's portal, Victoria Online. The site refresh will include technology enhancements. www.hyro.com

WA developer wins oil supply giant

Perth software developer ISS Group, which specialises in infrastructure and applications for the oil, gas, and mineral processing industries, has been selected to provide its BabelFish data-sharing system to Saudi Aramco. In a pilot project the software will be tested for between three and six months at more than 20 of Saudi Aramco's oil wells, explained Shane Atwell, managing director of ISS.

"BabelFish will provide Saudi Aramco with a capability to integrate and monitor the performance of their wells in real time over the Web," Atwell explained. In total Saudi Aramco has more than 10,000 wells, he added. www.issgroup.com

Vics revise PC purchasing plans

The Victorian Government called in its Minister for the Environment to help explain its revised PC purchasing panel and purchasing policies this week.

The new procurement policy will be mandatory for use across all departments and allows for the "reuse or recycling" of old PCs and notebook computers, explained John Thwaites, Minister for the Environment. "Electronic waste should be reused or recycled to protect the environment and provide valuable resources for new products," Thwaites said.

The six companies included on the purchasing panel were Acer, Dell, Hewlett-Packard, IPEX, Optima, and Toshiba, while two notable exclusions were IBM and Lenovo.

Blackwoods catalogue goes digital

Blackwoods, a provider of industrial and safety products, has used iICE Product Data Manager technology from Australian company Innovit to streamline production of its paper, CD-ROM, and Web parts catalogues.

Blackwoods traditionally spent millions of dollars to produce its printed catalogue, which contained more than 1700 pages of high-quality colour content, explained Bang Chau, CEO of Innovit. "To compound the problem, product data collected for the print catalogue was not in a format that could be used for the CD-ROM or Web catalogue. Publication of these two other catalogues was a separate undertaking, duplicating much of the effort," Chau said.

By using the iICE system, however, Blackwood is now able to manage large volumes of product information and produce customised editions of their catalogues faster than ever before, Chau added. www.innovit.com

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FORWARD thinking



INSIDER EDITION
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Beam scores terminal sales in Italy

Beam Communications, a subsidiary of voice and data products supplier Tele-IP, has received an order for satellite terminals from Italian company Telespazio.

Michael Capocchi, general manager of Beam, said that Telespazio, which is a joint venture between Finmeccanica and Alcatel, designs and manages telecommunication networks for specialised applications such as telemedicine, distance learning, and disaster recovery telecommunications. "Beam has worked very closely with Telespazio over the last 12 months. Now that a number of customer applications have reached commercialisation, we are in the final stages of negotiating an ongoing partner agreement." www.beamcomm.net

NSC upgrades Reckon call centre

NSC Enterprise Solutions has been selected to upgrade Reckon's customer centre to an Avaya IP telephony platform. "The Avaya IP telephony solution being implemented by Reckon will not only cope with the company's expected growth but will also enable it to deploy a broader set of customer interaction capabilities," said Craig Neil, managing director of NSC. www.nsc.net.au/enterprise.htm

TodayCorp gets among the contracts

Australian online learning specialist TodayCorp launched itself into the final quarter of the 2006 financial year by winning a contract from the Australian Defence Force and building an online learning program for the Port of Brisbane.

TodayCorp's subsidiary Impart was awarded the defence contract, which requires the provision of an online learning package for the Deployed Forces Support Unit. The package will help military personnel deal with potentially threatening situations by having a better understanding of their circumstances. It will also improve their ability to react and cope should such circumstances occur, said Joe Ward, CEO of TodayCorp.

The Brisbane system was designed to help with the implementation of new laws concerning port security, including the Maritime Security Identification Card. "We were challenged in working with the Port of Brisbane Corporation on what is sure to set a benchmark in security preparedness within the maritime industry," Ward said. www.todaycorp.com

Aussies worth watching

A roundup of companies making waves at home and abroad

NATURAL SYSTEMS is an immigration systems company and its premium product — **Border Management Systems (BMS)** — is used by several countries. BMS can be used in international airports, border crossing points, seaports, immigration offices, visa-issuing offices, passport offices, and cruise ships. www.BorderSystems.com

MULTIBASE specialises in Internet-enabled e-business solutions. Its traditional business is the development and licensing of its application development toolset and database for Unix and CL. The company supports large and small customers across Australia and overseas directly and through a dedicated partner network. www.mbase.com.au

KESEM INTERNATIONAL is a software engineering services and solutions organisation that specialises in simulation, modelling, and decision support systems. Kesem is a preferred supplier to Australia's Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO) and Defence Materiel Organisation (DMO), but offers services to both Australian and international organisations. www.kesem.com.au

CONSULTEL provides professional and managed services in telecommunications and information technology. The company's capabilities range from high level strategic, business, and regulatory advice to the various aspects of consultancy, technical design, systems integration, turnkey projects, and project management. Consultel has provided services throughout Australia and in more than 18 countries. www.consultel.com.au

AFRAME provides outsourced online learning, assessment and compliance management solutions. The company's software allows the rapid authoring of multimedia assessment items that can incorporate video, audio, images, and animation. Customers include Foxtel, AXA, Zurich Finance Services, Shell, and a number of education departments. www.aframe.com.au

ADAPTIVE SYSTEMS is a developer of information management systems using open-standards-based technologies. Adaptive has developed reusable system integration frameworks based on J2EE and open technologies such as SML, Java, HTML and databases. Adaptive develops, hosts, and maintains complex applications and products for government, commercial, and non-profit organisations. www.adaptivesystems.com.au

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DEAL MAKERS

Telstra completes merger in HK

Telstra has wrapped up the merger of its subsidiary Hong Kong CSL with New World PCS to form a new operation that is claimed to be Hong Kong's number one mobile operator in terms of revenue, profitability, and customers. Telstra has a 74.6 per cent stake in the merged entity, which goes by the name of CSL New World Mobility Group. "The merger is on a debt-free basis, meets Telstra's strict acquisition criteria, and is expected to deliver more than \$A400 million of cost savings," explained Sol Trujillo, CEO of Telstra. www.telstra.com.au/abouttelstra/media/mediarelease_s_article.cfm?ObjectID=37236

Commander extends Volante bid

Commander has lifted its stake in Volante Group to more than 54.9 per cent of the issued shares, with a further 19 per cent promised by institutional investors. As a result, the offer period has been extended by law and will now close on April 19.

"We now have a high degree of confidence that the offer will succeed," said Adrian Coote, managing director of Commander. Despite his upbeat mood, Coote warned Volante shareholders to make their decisions without delay. "Accepting shareholders will receive the consideration faster than those acquired through the compulsory acquisition laws," he said. www.commander.com

Ansearch buys into open source

Australian search engine developer Ansearch has agreed to buy Mambo Communities, a supplier of Web site engines and services to the community of Mambo open source software developers. "This acquisition is part of the growth of our network of owned, licensed, and third-party Web sites," said Dean Jones, CEO of Ansearch.

"Mambo Communities brings a large group of Internet users into the Ansearch family. The partnership is an important step in extending the worldwide audience Ansearch is involved with."

Ansearch intends to provide continued financial support for Mambo Communities and will facilitate the channels through which Mambo developers distribute their code and collaborate, Jones said. www.ansearchltd.com

Senetas agreement with UK group

Australian company Senetas has agreed to sell its eCryp operation to British company Crescent Technology Ventures, which develops antiterrorist and national security technologies. eCryp is working on highly secure remote authentication systems based on biometric technology. As part of the \$US6 million deal, Senetas will offer Crescent licences to use Senetas' high-speed encryption technology. "The synergies with Crescent's other technologies and opportunities for market expansion are significant," claimed Francis Galbally, chairman of Senetas.

The deal will be financed by an exchange of Crescent shares that will constitute a reverse takeover under the rules of AIM, on which Crescent is listed, Galbally said. www.senetas.com

Salesforce.com gathers the troops

Australian IT users have shown significant acceptance of CRM and, more recently, on-demand software, making this country a core market in the Asia/Pacific region for Salesforce.com. Steve Russell, the company's CEO for Asia/Pacific who visited Australia this week, noted that the company's user conference in Sydney attracted more than 400 attendees. "The user group in Australia is the third or fourth largest in the world. It shows what appetite people have for software on demand in Australia," Russell said.

Jeremy Cooper, Salesforce.com's vice president of marketing for Asia/Pacific, added that the future is bright for on-demand software, despite increasing competition. "The barbarians are starting to arrive at the gate," he acknowledged, with reference to Oracle, Siebel, and Microsoft. "But this is more than just a technology shift. It's also a major cultural shift for competing vendors."

Feds release Aust developer data

Australian software product developers employed 17,000 staff and earned \$A2.7 billion in the 2004/05 financial year, according to a statistical analysis of specialist software developers in Australia that was released this week by the Australian Government. The report, *The Australian software industry and vertical application markets: globally competitive, domestically undervalued*, is said to be available for download from www.dcita.gov.au, but we were unable to access it.



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DEAL MAKERS

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Decideware teams with UK group

Decideware, an Australian company that offers a suite of on-demand business software, has joined forces with ADR International, an English purchasing consultancy. The two companies intend to work on the further development and promotion of ADR's Relational Need Analysis, a Web-based tool that analyses a user's supplier-relationship practices and competencies, explained Richard Benyon, managing director of Decideware.

Initially the agreement will cover only the Australian market, but ADR and Decideware expect it to be extended to other countries in the future. "The partners also see other synergies between their product offerings, which may lead to more joint initiatives," Benyon said. Target markets will include the pharmaceutical and foods industries, financial services, retail, manufacturing, automotive, and the mining and minerals sector. www.decideware.com

— BUSINESS BRIEFS —

- ASX-listed company Broad Investments has launched a subsidiary, BroadIP, that will offer voice-over-IP services to residential and business users Australia-wide. The new operation is claimed to have secured corporate VoIP contracts worth \$A720,000 while testing its offering in the past two months.
- Business telco PowerTel has introduced a range of wholesale VoIP services. "VoIP gives our wholesale partners the opportunity to have all their customers' communications — voice, video, and data — carried over one secure private network," said Paul Broad, managing director of PowerTel. www.powertel.com.au
- Unwired has launched its wireless broadband service in Melbourne, although the first phase of its network there, which will cover about 25 per cent of the city's population, will not be completed until late 2006. www.unwired.com.au
- Getronics has been awarded Australian distribution rights to retail solutions from Wincor Nixdorf. The solutions will include POS systems and peripherals, cash management systems, self service kiosks, and lottery systems.
- MXL, an Australian developer of student management systems, has raised \$A4 million through a placement of 42.1 million shares. The funds generated will be used to raise the company's software platform to .Net2 and provide capital for marketing.

BY ASSOCIATION

Collaboration key for SMEs

SMALL-TO-MEDIUM enterprises (SMEs) are a vital part of Australia's \$A90 billion ICT industry. SMEs make up nearly 80 per cent of all ICT businesses in Australia, and represent more than 70 per cent of the Australian Information Industry Association's (AIIA's) membership.

To develop and grow ICT businesses into global ventures, Australian businesses must create networks of companies which collaborate in the development of international markets.

One of AIIA's most important initiatives in 2006 is CollabIT, an innovative program which will provide like-minded companies with the opportunity to form collaborative networks, or clusters, to source new markets and increase sales.

CollabIT will allow SMEs to identify skills and synergies, and share their knowledge and resources for mutual benefit. The program will help local industry not only establish partnerships with similar small Australian companies, but also to forge alliances with multinational corporations, tap into their substantial resources, and access new markets.

Programs are already off the ground in Victoria and Western Australia, with the respective state governments demonstrating a willingness to work with industry to secure opportunities for the local ICT sector. AIIA will work with ICT companies and governments in most other states to expand CollabIT nationally.

Initial feedback suggests that interested companies are looking to tender jointly with other ICT companies as a major business growth strategy.

CollabIT is just one of the many initiatives that AIIA has developed to boost the growth of this vital sector of Australia's economy.

In another measure to improve the business environment for SMEs, AIIA has commissioned *Realising the Potential of the Local ICT Sector*, which will provide research and recommendations on emerging risks and opportunities for the local ICT industry.

We have produced an *SME Marketing Guide*, providing practical advice on a range of marketing, public relations, and commercialisation issues affecting smaller ICT companies.

And our highly successful *Developing Business Skills for ICT Entrepreneurs* program, launched last year to assist companies to expand their potential through mentoring and peer evaluation, continues to aid budding entrepreneurs to build their businesses, rather than simply run their businesses.

Rob Durie is chief executive officer Australian Information Industry Association www.aiaa.com.au

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Rust e-Research Roundup

Trust factor vital for outsourcing

A study of Australian CEOs has identified that well managed outsourcing arrangements based on mutual trust can create a difference of between 20 and 40 per cent on service, quality, cost and other performance indicators over outdated power-based relationships. Research conducted by Warwick Business School, Melbourne University, and LogicaCMG, showed that Australian CEOs who neglected to actively manage their relationships with outsourcing partners missed out on a "trust dividend" worth up to 40 per cent of the total contract value.

The study suggested that companies should agree a relationship charter with their outsourcing partner that sets a benchmark for behaviour. This standard should also introduce regular health checks, balanced scorecards and senior executive dashboards for customers as mechanisms for monitoring success.

Colin Holgate, CEO of LogicaCMG Australia, explained: "Power-based relationships are poor substitutes for trust-based partnerships given the high transaction costs of monitoring and imposing sanctions and the limited goals that can be pursued by both parties. Significantly, none of the organisations in the study cited a good contract as the key factor. Good relationship management techniques, such as flexible working arrangements, willingness to change, and frequent and effective communication, were however regularly highlighted."

Professor Leslie Willcocks from Warwick Business School, co-author of the report, said that real trust is not naïve but comes from planning, is steered by the right people, structures, processes, and measurement, and is earned from performance.

"It is clear that relationships are now themselves strategic assets and demand on-going senior executive investment and attention commensurate with their importance. Ignoring the value of properly managed outsourcing relationships is tantamount to corporate negligence — simply because it has such a huge impact on return on investment and the potential value gained from outsourcing."

Fallout from outsourcing failures

Gartner recently released survey results revealing that while outsourcing is on the rise, Australian companies face the risk of significant business disruption because too many decisions are taken without any overall strategy being in place or the ability to take a disciplined approach to the ongoing management of sourcing.

According to Gartner's latest global IT outsourcing survey conducted among 1002 companies, 495 of which were in the Asia/Pacific Region, Australian companies were found to be less strategic in their use of outsourcing than those in other developed economies. In Australia, 63 per cent of companies which outsourced used multiple service providers, with the average number being 3.4. Yet 84 per cent of Australian companies said they had no sourcing strategy in place and made their decisions purely ad hoc. Globally, this compares to 46 per cent of companies that didn't have a formal sourcing strategy. "Outsourcing has typically been seen as an IT or

procurement issue. But this survey in Australia raises important questions about proper risk-management and business continuity, not to mention the appropriate use of shareholder or company funds," said Rolf Jester, Gartner analyst. "The lack of an appropriate multisourcing strategy will lead to business disruptions at best, a business disaster at worst", he said.

Gartner is advising companies to adopt a new management skill it calls disciplined multisourcing. This is the controlled provisioning and blending of business and IT services from an optimal set of internal and external providers, aimed at helping companies achieve their business goals.

"As part of their sourcing strategy, organisations must carefully examine the goals they wish to reach from outsourcing, as well as their concerns. This exercise will not only help develop a sourcing strategy, sourcing maxims and the prioritisation of goals, but it will educate various stakeholders about realistic outcomes and possible false assumptions currently held about outsourcing," Jester said.

Home networking in for rocket ride

The market for home networking and connected entertainment devices will grow at an astonishing rate over the next few years, as the total value of home networking hardware, gateways, networked storage devices and networked entertainment devices rises from \$US14 billion in end-user revenue in 2005 to more than \$US85 billion by 2011, according to a recent study from ABI Research.

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RUST e-RESEARCH

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The major driver in overall revenue growth for this market is the transformation of most conventional consumer electronics devices such as game consoles, DVD players, TVs and portable media players from standalone devices to network-connected ones, using both wireless and wired IP communications technologies.

"This market has reached a major turning point," says Michael Wolf, an analyst with ABI. "Home networking has moved beyond a basic broadband sharing model to one of networked entertainment and convergence across the PC, consumer electronics, and communications devices. The emergence of enabling technologies such as 802.11n for wireless video distribution, HomePlug AV, and MoCA as alternative multimedia network backbones, and DLNA media server and device interoperability software, are all solidifying the foundation for an explosion of new devices and applications based on a fully connected home."

New digital media applications are creating end-user demand for connected entertainment and communications devices. The rise in popularity of multi-room PVR, place-shifting, and networked gaming are fast creating an increased need for a pervasive connectivity throughout the home, to the Internet and between different devices.

Data-rich mobiles take over market

Cutting-edge mobile phones integrated with various multimedia and rich-data functionalities are rapidly increasing their share of phones shipped in the Asia/Pacific market, according to surveys by In-Stat. For example, with 252.3 million mobile phones shipped in the region in 2005, 53.4 per cent had camera functions, In-Stat found. The plunging prices in emerging markets has greatly promoted their adoption.

"Digital cameras, including both digital still cameras and video cameras, will remain the most popular function of cutting-edge phones," said Victor Liu, In-Stat analyst. "By 2009, 67 per cent of mobiles sold in Asia/Pacific will have camera functionality."

The report by In-Stat found that:

- Phones with music-playing capabilities accounted for 23 per cent of phones sold: that figure is above the global average of 13.6 per cent.
- By 2009, the functionality and quality of music playing on mobile phones will be greatly enhanced, with music phones likely to be in direct competition with stand-alone music players.
- Mobile digital broadcasting TV phones, and cellular phones with alternative wireless broadband connectivity, were introduced to early adopters in South Korea and Japan in 2005.

Compliance spending out of control

AMR Research has released a wide-ranging study recently predicting that total compliance spending in 2006 will reach \$US27.3 billion, with \$US6 billion (or 22 per cent) allocated to the Sarbanes-Oxley Act. Spending will climb even higher in 2007, with companies devoting \$US28 billion to compliance initiatives.

READER RESPONSE

Hands off prototyping

Peter Kokinakos* responds to Cyril Brookes' article on The Perils of Prototyping last week

"In the good old days . . ." I'm not sure what was good about the old way of building IT applications.

The systems development life cycle, while rigorous and structured, led to huge delays in solving the critical business problems. Business cycles are so much shorter and compressed today that a line manager, executive, in fact any worker cannot afford to wait months or years for the answers to help them make the decisions that impact their organisation.

The delayed reaction times gave rise to the decentralisation of IT. The end-user community began using their own methods to get the data they needed. How many organisations are run on Excel spreadsheets because the IT guys haven't delivered the application in a relevant time frame?

The days when an application was the end result of developing are far gone. Especially in the BI world, each application is essentially a journey — never reaching a destination. Requirements change by the minute as the business demands immediate reaction. If the BI application remains unchanged for anything more than a few months the information is irrelevant.

BI applications do indeed need order and some methodology to ensure that the right information gets to the right person at the right time. Prototyping, when applied by professionals that know how to manage the iterations, can provide the framework necessary to ensure the integrity of the BI.

The alternative is to allow businesses to run using outdated and irrelevant information. Decisions are made by "gut instinct" or by "best guess". Let me say that there is nothing wrong with this method of decision-making. For someone who has been with the same company or in a position for a considerable length of time, this is a valid way of making a decision. But the newbie or the inexperienced person has no way of ensuring that the decision that they just made, has any chance of success. The introduction of even a fragment of relevant information into this process allows for a better quality decision.

The bigger issue in building BI applications is not in the development approach, but in the quality of the data. Most organisations now have terabytes of data in a variety of databases. It's not until they need to get to the data and air them out that they come to the hard realisation that most of them are unusable. Dirty data, missing and duplicated data — this is the most overlooked aspect of BI implementations.

This is where the real investment in time and resources is needed. Firstly, sort out which data are valid, clean, and complete. Then catalogue them and sort them into structures that make sense to a user, not a programmer versed in 3rd, 4th, and 5th normal forms. Add to this a definition that gives the user a context. Then, and only then, give them reporting and analysis tools to interrogate the data.

So, can all this be done iteratively in a prototyping frame work? It's the *only* way it can be done to answer the complex questions facing businesses today in a fast, responsive way.

** Peter Kokinakos is taking a break after 18 years with Cognos*

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The Rust Report is published by **Dialog Marketing Services Pty Ltd**,
PO Box 437, Roseville, NSW 2069, Australia.

Publisher Len Rust
RustOz@bigpond.com.au or
phone 0413 588 728

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Rust-Ed@bigpond.net.au or
phone 0413 544 609

Advertising inquiries to
RustOz@bigpond.com.au

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QM Technologies
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REVOLVING DOORS

CA shifts some chairs

Gavin Selkirk, Computer Associates' area manager and managing director for the Pacific, and area manager for Japan, has been promoted to vice president and executive assistant to CA's CEO John Swainson. He has moved to New York.

Selkirk has been replaced by Tony Armfield, who was formerly CA's country manager for New Zealand and who will, in turn, be replaced by Stuart Preston. Preston has been with the company since 2002.

Bleak times for ex-execs

Things are not looking rosy for former CA executives Sanjay Kumar and Australian Stephen Richards after a US judge rejected their pleas to dismiss two charges of obstruction of justice against them.

Kumar, the former CA CEO, and Richards, former vice president of sales, had been indicted on charges they fraudulently extended financial reporting periods to boost sales artificially and raise the company's share price. CA has already paid \$US225 million in restitution and replaced almost all of the former executive team.

A/P role for Ben Price

Ben Price has been appointed Business Objects' vice president of customer support for Asia/Pacific and Japan. He will be based in Sydney.

Before joining BI Price was in charge of regional customer support for BEA Systems.

Brett Gross in Motion

Motion Computing, a US developer of mobile computing and wireless communications systems, has appointed Brett Gross regional manager in Australia and New Zealand. He will be responsible for all of the company's sales and marketing efforts in Australia.

Prior to joining Motion Gross worked with Panasonic in the Toughbook group.

Mitel opens shop in WA

IP communications specialist Mitel has opened an office in Western Australia and appointed Nedi Nheu state manager. He has previously worked for Alcatel, Newbridge Networks, and Optus.

Synergy puts on execs

Synergy Plus, a Melbourne-based technology services and solutions provider, has made a number of senior appointments.

Tom Smyth has been appointed head of the company's new facilities management division. He was previously with KAZ Technology Services as general manager of operations.

John Field has been appointed service-oriented architecture practice manager. He joined Synergy from Agentis Software, and has also worked for Linfox and Computer Power Group.

Alex Adams has been appointed manager of application services. He joined the company from the group information services senior management team at PMP Limited.

— Around the traps —

- Simon Baker, the CEO of realestate.com.au since its formation in 2001, has been appointed to the company's board and will become managing director. Baker replaces Martin Hoffman, who announced last year that he would resign from the board when ninemsn sold its stake in realestate.com.au

- BroadIP, the newly formed VoIP operation of listed company Broad Investments, has got off to a running start by acquiring broadband services provider Shiftreload. As part of that deal Michael Anderson has joined BroadIP as CTO. He was previously CEO of Shiftreload.

- Patrick McGrory has resigned from the board of eServGlobal. He joined the company in 2003 and was a director and CEO until January of this year. Although no longer on the board McGrory retains a significant shareholding in the company.

- Dr Albert Ho has resigned from the board of Ansearch to pursue his medical interests in Perth.

- Neil Wiles has joined MobileActive — a provider of content and entertainment for mobile phones — as managing director, and Peter Slater has been appointed CFO. Wiles was a founder of MobileActive's mobile and wireless subsidiary, GlobalOne Mobile Entertainment. Slater was previously with Optus where he was both a commercial manager and a branded marketing commercial manager in the mobile division.