



A little help from my friends

Hello and welcome to The Infonomics Letter for June 2012.

This edition hasn't worked out quite as planned. Many will remember my scheduled visit to Mexico City at the end of the month. The travel time was supposed to provide a great opportunity for some new content from me, building on some very interesting material just released in Australia.

However, for the first time that I can recall in over 25 years of offshore ventures, I have been caught by a travel bug, and have spent much of the time in Mexico City flat on my back fighting off a severe bronchial infection.

Thus it was that I issued a plea to four points of the globe for thoughtful contributions on matters of success, value and business change.

Fortunately, I was able to mostly complete my obligations here. It was rewarding to speak about governance of IT to the 100-member conference in the Mexico Chapter of the Association of Enterprise Architects. Perhaps better was the investment of my hosts here, Dux Diligens, as they brought their local consultants and colleagues from Costa Rica and Colombia to learn about ISO 38500. With two academics from ITAM and three other consultants (including a senior gentleman from KPMG), there can be no doubt that Mexico has taken a giant step forward in its potential to improve performance of investment in IT-enabled business and change, through effective adoption of ISO 38500.

The Spanish Edition of *Waltzing with the Elephant* draws inexorably closer to completion and should be on sale by the end of July. And the education program continues with events in Malaysia and Australia during the coming few weeks.

And now, I invite you to enjoy articles from The Netherlands, Argentina, UK and Australia.

Please enjoy! Mark Toomey 1 July 2012

A BIT in the boardroom

by Frank van Outvorst Hans Pijnenburg

Assuming the organizations' boardroom is the place from where an organization is steered and governed, one can ask if and -if so- to what level of detail, IT should be a topic of discussion in the boardroom. Should the boardroom address IT in a level of detail of bits and bytes or should the boardroom regard IT as an ever available utility? As in most cases truth is somewhere in between, depending on the importance of IT to the business in achieving its business goals. The boardroom should develop a certain feeling and sensibility for IT topics with regard to:

- threats from IT developments (for example money and time consuming major IT development projects that never come to a successful ending, or the appearance of new software on the market that puts all the organizations software out of date);
- Possibilities that IT offers as an enabler to achieve existing business goals or set and achieve new goals;
- IT developments and its consequences for the way the organization has to communicate with markets or society and will be appreciated as a possible employer, especially regarding to the rise of next "Digital Native" generations.

Handling these topics is most times referred to as business IT alignment. Business IT alignment is an essential topic for boardroom discussions. However one cannot and must not expect boardroom members to act as IT experts. Instead the boardroom must be provided with relevant signals and feelings that come from appropriate IT management and IT control processes and structures.

Most (Dutch) organizations have all kind of IT management and IT Control processes in place. This results in an eminent position on the management agenda for IT subjects. Nevertheless a lot of IT-organizations are afraid -or at least they should be- that they still don't understand the business needs, can't meet the business expectations in the future and that business in most cases is still unsatisfied with their IT. The latter being in most cases actually true. Main reason for these mixed feelings is that having good or even superb IT management and IT Control only seems to help realizing a good supply of IT Services, without realizing a proper demand for IT services.

The misunderstanding and difficult communication between business and IT doesn't come with new IT topics, like for example new media, cloud or software as a service. It has been a serious gap between

business and IT for decades now. And without understanding and addressing 2 important aspects of governance of IT, the gap will continue to exist. Business and IT should be open and sensible to bridge the gap. In bridging the gap business should take control and the lead and approach the bridging from two perspectives 1) the content of IT and 2) the function of IT as a means of production or assets.

1. Managing the demand articulation from the business domain to the IT domain.

This first perspective has to do with the demand for IT content. And in that perspective one can ask what is needed to come to articulation of demand for IT. What should business know about IT? What do they know about HRM? They know about people and know how to draw up requirements and guidelines to recruit, cherish, reward and fire personnel. But not how Resource Management actually is fulfilled. The same goes for IT. For example, not the brand of the hand held devices should be important to the board (of course certain models look sexy on anyone) but the functionality of these devices to the business processes and the employees should. This functionality (in this case of hand held devices) goes for both the possibilities of as the threads from or limitations to these devices.

A board should make the functionality of IT to one of its main topics and consider:

- Follow developments in IT (such as Social Media and Cloud) and translate them to their business and try to overlook the consequences to the perception of their market, to the way of communicating to the market or to the way the market will look at their organization as an employer. These IT developments contain both threats and opportunities that could affect the business.
- Match the ever changing information needs within the business processes to the functional capabilities of applications or apps.

So regarding to the functionality of IT it is all about information and communication: business should focus on their gathering, use and distribution of information. Is working from at home allowed, and -if so- what information should and can be transferred from the office to the home workspace of the workers? Are they allowed to bring their own devices (BYOD) because that attracts (young) potentials to your company, and -if so- again what (kind of) information is to be transferred from the office and these devices and vice versa?

Of course it is important to understand that it is not desirable to regard the organization as one entity in this regard. Therefore companies should define separate manageable information domains. Requirements are to be set up per domain. And

each information domain has a dedicated and expert owner knowing what to expect from processes, applications, information and in the end from IT. Notice that this information domain owner is a business process expert and therefore could be another employee than a business manager, who could own the budget!

So this first perspective is all about understanding that a per information domain differentiated need for information and communication is necessary in order to come to a differentiated demand articulation.

2. Taking responsibility for managing information as an asset.

The second perspective deals with the question how business is going to really steer and govern IT. And derived from that first question: how is the business going to benefit from the functionality of IT as a whole? Dividing the information asset of an organization can only work if business is adequately supported by Business Information Management. Adequate support means:

- On a strategic level the CIO, who is appointed also as a member of the board, becomes responsible of setting up and communicating an information strategy throughout the whole organization. This information strategy translates the strategic business goals into IT goals and oversees the influence from actual IT (performance or deployment) on the strategic business goals. The corporate information strategy represents or covers all the different information domains of the organization. The CIO will illustrate the realization of the strategic business goals to the board by means of dashboards and will use these dashboards to steer Business Information Management.
- The CIO will also be responsible for getting a solid and approved architecture for business, information, IT application and IT infrastructure. The application and infrastructure will be drawn up by the IT department. These architectures become the guidelines to the organization for developing the information asset. Of course these kind of architectures or frameworks should also exist per information domain.
- Within each information domain information managers and demand managers will operate. These roles collaborate with each other and with the CIO. The CIO is responsible for their processes and constant improvement. Of course the size of information and demand management team(s) depends on the size of the organization's information asset.
- The Information Manager(s) will fill in the information strategy for each information

domain, together with the information domain owners and will act as the Service Demand Manager towards IT.

- Each Demand Manager will look at the use of information and application within the domains and will be responsible to keep a good eye on the quality of the gathered, produced and distributed information.

Implementing Business Information Management this way gives organizations a chance to benefit from dedicated focus on different aspects of IT. Business can concentrate on business issues ("What"). The IT department (or external IT supplier) focuses on deployment of IT ("With what"). And Business Information Management translates the needs into supply ("How"). Each focus area is an expertise of its own.

By supporting the business by Business Information Management the demand articulation is much better defined to and understood by IT. It will ultimately lead to a better integration of IT within the business: from a bit in the boardroom to enabling, effective and efficient use of bits on the shop floor.

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Frank van Outvorst Hans Pijnenburg

Navigating through challenge

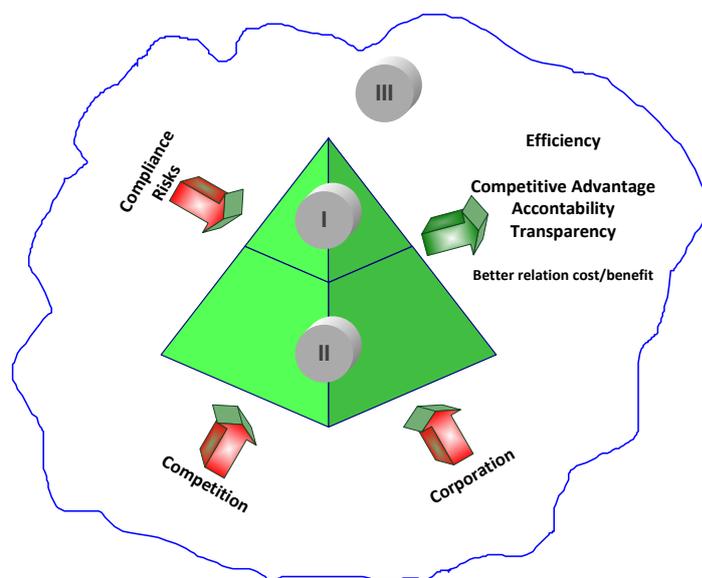
by Tania Cozzi.

"We must work with what we have". "There is no possibility of hiring more resources and we must meet complex additional regulations by both government and corporations". "Being optimistic, last year's Budget will be cut by 25% to 40%, and the work load will increase on an average of 20%".

Does this sound familiar? Have you heard this in your company lately? Do not despair and read this article carefully.

All of the above are phrases that could be heard on a regular basis in times of crisis (and we have seen a good share of those) here in Argentina. This article aims to share with you, dear colleagues, some useful tips to navigate through troubled waters and arrive

safe and sound, to shore. These are not magical solutions or applying complex financial and mathematical formulas. It's about a life jacket that we can create in our very own companies, which may not be too showy or attractive but will keep us with sufficient energies to stay afloat until the crisis recedes. Here is a diagram of the contents that will be brought forward next:



To know what I need and the risks of not having it (Strategy and Planning).

There are many different variables which currently determine needs, for people and companies. In today's multicolor and multifaceted world, one of a synergic richness not often seen in history, boosted by technology, everything is shared. "When in Rome do as the Romans do". This step is all about Strategy and Management tasks. When the head does not know where to go, the feet cannot decide for themselves.

If I only had an hour to chop down a tree, I would spend the first 45 minutes sharpening my axe.

Abraham Lincoln

True Story – Part 1: In a small financial company the Regulating Entity demanded compliance of the same regulation that was applied to much bigger companies. The need for compliance was a must, so I suggested we applied the "feasibility" criteria. They had to abide by the same rules, but correct planning and efficient use of resources could accomplish what seemed impossible before.

II

To know what I have and how much it's worth (Inventory and Classification)

A simple way of not being efficient is to ignore the resources (human and monetary) and assets (HW, SW, Applicative, Information) I can count on in my company. Many times (while not having so many economic restrictions) we tend to accumulate, often superimposing effort and investment. In times of crisis not only this turns out to be a ridiculous practice but also budget restrictions will lead us to look for new ways of using what we already have. It's about a middle management responsibility as well as the operative level workers.

Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can.

Arthur Ashe

True Story – Part 2: The Company started a series of outsourced processes (due to the fact that they did not have the necessary "know-how" or their own resources) which reflected the company's strategy: a Business Impact Analysis for each area, formalized by every Data Owner.

Additionally an Information Inventory was created, and later classification (and all of the associated assets i.e. Hardware, Software, Data bases, etc.) which was related with the BIAs generated in the initial Project. Later on, with Inventory and data classification, a Map of Business Processes was created, which provided a detailed vision of actors and roles across the company and the actions performed by each one in the chain of value generation.

III

To discover the interactions and potentialities of low cost solutions (Innovations - Use what you have in "mysterious ways")

To reach creative solutions from ordinary materials and resources may seem impossible. Believe me, I'm not crazy. Not only it is possible, but also it works!

One of the most common difficulties of managers is that they have stopped knowing their company's resources and assets, their internal processes and the risks they take every day.

It's the same each time with progress. First they ignore you, then they say you're mad, then dangerous, then there's a pause and then you can't find anyone who disagrees with you.

Tony Benn, British politician, in the Observer

True Story – Part 3: For this case I designed a diagram called "Mamushka Style". Projects were generated and executed, first strategic ones (BIA, Information Inventory and Classification – including HW, SW and Data Bases), and then, with the obtained results, other operative tasks were updated (Operational Risks Analysis, Business Continuity, Corporate Governability, Continuity Planning, Business Process Inventory, etc). This helped achieving synergy and homogenization of used data (this decreases maintenance costs greatly, centralizes key information avoiding duplicity and allows results to be seized by multiple areas for various purposes, so costs will be divided making the investment all the more profitable).

Additionally, this client required strategic guidance on identification of new interactions that allowed an increase in productivity of existent processes with smaller investments.

Conclusion

The best thing about the future is that it comes one day at a time.

Abraham Lincoln

- Set strategic and operational objectives (they are both important).
- Know yourself and generate structures that favor easy adaptability.
- Do not be afraid to use your imagination. Get ready for failure sometimes, but mostly, for succeeding. Don't forget that CRISIS also means OPPORTUNITY

Thank you for the "opportunity" to share my experiences with all of you. Good luck and until next time.

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Her greatest passion is to find the way to turn complicated into simple, and expensive and theoretical concepts into accessible and realistic solutions. She enjoys challenges and the use of common sense to sort them.

Delivering Value

by Umamaheshwar Mudigonda

We often hear the phrase "Cash is the lifeblood of business", but given the pervasive nature of Information Technology (IT) in almost every business, it will not be a hyperbole to state that "IT is the lifeblood of business". With its ubiquitous nature IT plays different roles within an organisation to meet different objectives e.g.:

- Running the business: Use of IT to bring in efficiency e.g., accounting and finance functions
- Changing the business: Implementation of a Supply Chain Management (SCM) system or Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to change the business to effectively meet the business objectives
- Innovation: Use of IT to gain competitive advantage, introduce new business models and products e.g., internet banking

Whatever be the role of IT, it is central to creating value in an organisation. The biggest pay off for an organisation in the use of IT is when it is used to drive or enable business strategy creating competitive edge in the market place through IT-enabled strategic initiatives.

However defining, measuring and optimising the value of IT remain elusive, due to the fact that any strategic initiative dependent on or enabled by IT quickly becomes a technology initiative, rather than being treated as a business change project with an IT component, and the context for the investment is soon forgotten. Any such initiative is cross-functional in nature, cutting across various departments or units within an organisation and also entities external to the organisation e.g., customers and suppliers. A holistic view is required to understand the impact and govern such initiatives to realise the anticipated benefits.

For easier understanding of the impact created by an IT-enabled initiative, let us consider an example:

A retail organisation engaged in production and distribution of consumer products through its retail outlets, wants to change its business strategy to include an online channel to grow its business to counter the competitor moves and to take advantage the power of internet.

In this article let us examine the following two critical aspects of such strategic change:

- What is the scope of "change" for the retail organisation, other than the changes in IT landscape?
- Stakeholder management as part of changing the culture of the organisation to successfully embrace the change?

Scope of the "change", other than changes in IT landscape:

A new online sales channel will have a different set of factors of competition than faced by the retail organisation in its traditional sales channels i.e., retail outlets. This will impact on how it competes, and captures customers, in the market place setting the tone for altogether a new business strategy with the need for a new business model and the attendant changes in the operating model among other key changes. So execution of this new strategy will have an impact on the following key business aspects:

- Business model
 - Product and service offerings
 - Revenue model
 - Target customer segment
- Operating model
 - How to deliver services to customers and
 - Changes to the organisation structure to align with changes in business model
- Business processes
 - Sales
 - Delivery and
 - Operations
- External stakeholders
 - Customers and
 - Suppliers
- Internal stakeholders:
 - Employees and
 - Need for new skill sets, competencies and compensation models
- Organisational culture change to embrace the new business and operating models

With regard to the IT landscape the new strategy will have an impact on the following key aspects:

- IT Architecture
- IT Application portfolio
- IT Infrastructure
- IT service management system and
- IT organisation

Stakeholder Management:

Stakeholder management, as part of organisational culture change management, is very critical to successfully embrace the proposed change. All the stakeholders both internal and external need to be identified and analysed in terms of their interest in the proposed change and influence on the proposed change within organisation.

In the example given above, the following will be the key stakeholders:

- External
 - Customers e.g., how do they deal with the organisation in the new business model?
 - Suppliers e.g., change in procurement methods

- Internal
 - Business e.g., what impact will it have on the sales team in terms of their compensation? Users of the new system? What behaviours are expected from various business stakeholders?
 - IT: Change in their behaviours needed on the new "perspective" of customers who do not just include internal but also external as well?
 - Support staff not part of either IT or Business: Impact of alignment with new business and operating models?

Analysis of external stakeholders provides the necessary information to align the business and operating models with their expectations. Regarding the internal stakeholders, the above analysis provides significant insights into the political landscape within the organisation as to who will support, who will resist and who are neutral and helps in fine-tuning the approach for managing their expectations accordingly.

Changing the culture of an organisation addresses the "soft" aspect of change, and is the most challenging one and a real test for the organisational leadership. This requires a change in the beliefs, attitudes and behaviours of the people in the organisation. One of the most popular approaches is that of John Kotter's 8 steps for organisational change to engage the stakeholders and get the necessary buy in to create and sustain change

1. Creating a sense of urgency: *articulate a new vision, burning platform, and rationale business case for change*
2. Creating the guiding coalition: *assemble a team with enough power and influence in the organisation to lead the change effort*
3. Developing vision and strategy: *creating a compelling vision of the future to guide the direction of the change*
4. Communicating the change vision: *create a common understanding of the change vision*
5. Empowering employees for broad-based action: *remove obstacles to the change. Change systems, organisation structures that undermine the change*
6. Generating short term wins: *plan for visible quick wins, reward employees involved*
7. Consolidating gains and producing more change: *build on the momentum created, use credibility to change policies and procedures that don't fit the vision*
8. Anchoring new approaches in the culture: *making change stick, making sure continuity of new behavior and results*

Adequate understanding of the impact of change and effective stakeholder management are very critical in successful value delivery by an IT-enabled strategic change, and also helpful in proper set up, governance

and control of such initiatives and keeping them on track

References:

"Leading Change" by John P. Kotter

"Enterprise Value: Governance of IT Investments, The Val IT Framework 2.0" by IT Governance Institute

Umamaheshwar Mudigonda (Uma) has over 18 years of experience in IT Industry covering Business Analysis, IT Project / Programme Management, Business Relationship Management, IT Process Consulting, and Practice Management areas.

He has executed large IT Projects and Process Transformation engagements in various roles such as Engagement Manager, Engagement Lead and Coach.

He has been with TCS for more than a decade and is currently the Deputy Head for IT Process and Service Management Consulting (ITPSM) Practice for UK/mainland Europe helping clients in large IT Process transformation programmes leveraging industry models and best practices like CMMI®, ITIL®, Lean/Six Sigma, Agile, COBIT® and ISO 38500.

Learning from the leaders in formulating IT-enabled business strategies

by Poorang Haghjoo PMP, MCITP, MCPD, MCTS, MCP

Introduction

In response to many failures of large IT investments, ruined credits of various enterprises due to incorrect business-IT decision makings, on the other hand rapid growth of technology and competitive business environment needs some leaders have claimed governance of information technology is the single most important predictor of the value organisations generate from investments made in IT (Weill and Ross, 2004).

It is believed that the first step that empowers a CIO leader to carry out the critical task of enabling the enterprise to benefit from what technology can offer is developing and implementing good IT governance (Broadbent and Kitzis, 2005). As this may provide a strong basis for formulating IT-enabled business strategies in an enterprise, this paper consolidates the best practises from available academic and industry literature and provides a very short summary for identifying the characteristics and requirements of governance of IT structures that are claimed to be more likely to succeed.

What is IT Governance?

IT governance is defined as organization's framework for business-IT decision making. It involves specifying

(a) in what domain(s) the decision-making process will be involved; (b) who makes the decisions and who is to be held accountable for what aspects of those decisions, and (c) how these decisions should be made and supervised (Although not equal, but in this paper "IT governance" has the same meaning as "governance of IT" and both have been used interchangeably).

Is IT governance the same as IT management?

It needs to be clear that IT governance is very different from IT management. IT governance focuses on inputs and decision rights, where IT management is indeed making and executing particular IT decisions (Broadbent and Weill, 1998; Weill and Woodham, 2002; Broadbent and Kitzis, 2005). From another angle, IT Governance has a say in on both i) getting involved to present business operations and performance and ii) conquering future business challenges. However, IT Management concentrates on keeping the IT products and services and the managing operations of IT efficient and effective on a day to day basis. Also, business objectives defined by enterprise governance are inputs to the IT governance and consequently, IT governance drives aims, objectives and performance measures required to manage IT successfully (Salle, 2004).

Best practices for good governance of IT

To determine what truly separates the good from the average and bad in IT governance, Broadbent and Kitzis worked with more than 250 organisations in a study with the MIT Sloan Centre for Information Systems Research (CISR). They found that enterprises with effective IT governance shared six common markers (Broadbent and Kitzis 2005). The order of markers below is based on their priority of appearance in different publications.

High-Level Executive Participation in IT Governance

The first common agreed upon priority shows the more senior executive's involvement the greatest positive influence on having effective IT governance. CEO participation followed by the COO, business unit leaders and business unit CIOs as well as involvement of corporate CIOs and CFOs has a significant positive correlation with IT governance performance. The executives' understanding of how IT governance works is an easy way to measure this construct. The higher the percentage of business executives who could accurately describe their enterprise's IT governance arrangements; though, the higher the enterprise's IT governance performance.

Clear Business Objectives for IT Investments

More effective IT governance is shown by enterprises that focused on specific objectives for their IT investments--such as reducing time to market, improving product quality, or improving employee

collaboration. The businesses had a better chance of delivering good results by putting their energies into fewer, more important areas. Good governance guarantees that business objectives were clear and well understood.

Clearly Differentiated Business Strategy

Some leaders believe that this marker is the most important one which believes good IT governance concerns business strategy not IT. IT governance with higher performance goes hand in hand with obvious and well-differentiated business strategies. Having concentration on desirable behaviours in all management processes including IT governance, is the result of a focused business strategy.

Formal Methods of Communication

Formal communication methods and mechanisms which serve to strengthen the relationships between CIOs and executive colleagues need to be employed by effective IT governance. These formal ways also help enterprises reinforce many of the other markers of effective IT governance, like, executive participation, stability, and exception processes.

Well-Functioning, Formal Exception Processes

Ways of dealing with exceptions and disagreements need to be established in order to have effective IT governance in an enterprise. In the words of Peter Weill (2004) at MIT, "Exception processes are how organisations learn." If you don't have procedures for handling exceptions, great opportunities might be missed. However the exception processes that work should be known and transparent to all participants. IT governance is probably not effective or appropriate for the organisation if they have much non-sanctioned IT activity in the enterprise.

Stable IT Governance, With Few Changes From Year To Year

Not having stable IT governance processes made it hard for business executives to understand how IT governance operates. Considering changes are unavoidable when enterprise strategies change, more changes usually lead to lower performance.

Besides the above markers, adopting an enterprise wide approach, clear accountability, need for an agreed upon IT governance standard, achieving trust for the IT function, proper monitoring and measurement systems and ultimately focusing on the cost are among the best practices NCC addresses (accessed via ISACA web site).

To conclude in simple words, Mark Toomey (2009), leading expert and seasoned advisor to boards and executives on corporate governance of IT and ISO 38500 believes that governance of IT involves a systematic structure that focuses on the business use of IT. This focus needs to be achieved through understanding of the organisation's core business system.

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Events Agenda: Malaysia, Australia

The Infonomics effort to explain ISO 38500 and governance of information technology returns to its most frequent destination in July:

- 19 – 20 July: Kuala Lumpur: "ISO 38500 for IT Success and Value". For details and registration email info@expitris.com.

In August, the Australian Industry Group will host another round of the popular half day "Aligning Technology to Business" seminar. Put these dates into your calendar, and look for details of how to register in the June and July Infonomics Letters:

- [Melbourne: 14 August](#)
- [Adelaide: 15 August](#)
- [Sydney: 16 August](#)
- [Brisbane: 17 August](#)

Previous participants in these sessions have been predominantly senior and executive level business managers, who rated the content as pitched at their level and relevant to their roles.

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