

# VIEWPOINT

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## Five Tips for New Times

Leaving the economic crisis behind, companies are focusing back on growth.



ILLUSTRATION BY MANJITH P B

**AFTER YEARS** of cutbacks; it is now time for innovation.

The CIO is the key stakeholder and must be the initiator in the new times. Here are five important tips to better fulfill that role.

After two years of continuous budget cuts, we now find that the focus is shifting. More companies are focusing back on growth and innovation.

Business innovation, new product launches and new markets development – all would require IT. This gives CIOs a great opportunity to play a greater role in his/her organisation. They can now develop new strategies and determine the direction for the company to take.

Not all CIOs think these developments as opportunities. Certainly not as the CEO constantly moving target during the match. However, the question is what to do in order to excel as a CIO? With thanks to Christine Hodgson we have five tips to always keep in mind.

**Understand your business and your customers:** Understand how your business (apart from the competition) is vital to you. This distinction can be anywhere in it: customer service, reli-

ability, innovative new products.

Whatever it is, the CIO must understand these key values. He/she must also understand who the customers are and what channels they use. And what are the implications for IT?

If you are sure you understand the business, you can count on more commitment from the major stakeholders within the organisation.

**Recognise your active role in corporate strategy and mission:** CEOs expect more than just a CIO's role from you. They want you to think business goals and play a proactive role in shaping the future of the organisation. So work with your CEO instead for him. Create proper connections between corporate strategy and mission and your own set for IT.

**Divide your time between innovations and operations:** CIOs often get bogged down with daily operational jobs. But those who wish to have an influence and make a difference must put time and effort in innovation. Companies have to change rapidly to be ahead of industry changes and to be active in the marketplace. And none of it can happen without IT.

You can delegate routine activities



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Ronald Kunneman is Founder and Owner of an innovative Internet company, Digitra. It provides Internet access, wireless and multimedia services. Kunneman is also involved in a broad-spectrum of business tasks and responsibilities.

and operations to team members.

That will allow you to free up a significant portion of your time and make plans for the future. Also, use this time to 'see the future' and reevaluate your strategy and mission in order to transform your business.

**Carry-out IT issues to the organisation:** After two decades of IT centralisation, times are turning. Managers are more concerned with do-it-yourself projects. Since your team have better grip on new developments, use managers to support them and explain the pros and cons. Carry out the developments but use your organisation to 'spread the word'.

**Do not underestimate your know-how:** We generally discount the knowledge that exists within our own IT organisation. You and your team are aware of the processes and internal and external information flows within the company. All this ensures that you know better than anyone else. You can use those insights and advice your CEO what can be done for the company to be more efficient. These tips will help you improve the performance of your business as well as the IT organisation. 