

## ComputerWeekly – What Direction will IT Take in 2007?

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As we bid farewell to 2006 and begin to see the realities of 2007 (ie, no real change to the problems we had in 2006), I thought I would have a look at what could change 2007 into a more interesting year in the IT space.

First, wouldn't it be great to get more IT and line of business people working together? For this to happen we need to change the nomenclatures used, and provide enabling technologies that allow business processes to be matched with technical capabilities, and vice versa. Sounds like a job for service oriented architectures (SOA).

Second, I would like to see greater harmony within the supplier community. This is needed in many areas, but I will pick on two.

SOA springs straight to mind - a nascent market that is still massively misunderstood by those with the responsibility for buying, but where suppliers are already playing "my SOA is better than your SOA" games - and confusing everyone (often including themselves) further. How nice it would be if they would actually all pull together, create a solid market and then fight over it.

The second thing that comes to mind is to get away from the litigious nature of supplier relations at the moment - getting rid of spurious personal pension schemes such as SCO's chasing of IBM, or of patent infringement cases such as Roxio suing Nero, or Creative and Cisco suing Apple. Again, let's work in the best interests of the customers, and in making technology do what it should do - facilitate better business and easier life.

Third, I would like to see the death of the massively overpriced mobile data plan. Now that essentially no one is paying for data transfers down a wired connection, we still have to pay large amounts per megabyte when we are on the road.

Worse, even if you are on a data plan, try travelling abroad - a visit to a US hotel that was having problems with its wired system cost me more than £150 for a one-night stay recently.

All-you-can-eat data plans are coming through from the likes of 3 and T-Mobile - here's to 2007 being the end of the per-byte plan.

Fourth, I would like to see much greater use of networking at home. I want my PVR, TV, hi-fi and everything else to have an RJ45 connection to and from it, or better still, full Wi-Fi 802.11g/n, enabling me to stream content where I want it, as I want it.

With the price of tuning componentry falling to unprecedented lows (digital television tuning circuitry is available at under £10), we could look at having, say, 10 tuners in a piece of kit, enabling each person in a house to watch a different channel at the same time.

Yes, we need better codecs (the gubbins that compresses and decompresses audio and video) to shrink the data feeds, fully ratified 802.11n for fast enough Wi-Fi and some real agreement on integration, but we are getting there.

Fifth, I really want this to be the year of RFID. Yes, 2005 was meant to be, 2006 was heralded as being the real year, but I do feel that RFID will really come of age this year.

We need better education as to where RFID fits in with existing technologies (such as the humble barcode), and we need a better understanding of the difference between passive and active RFID, but I expect to see much greater uptake of RFID, along with sensor and actuator technologies as we go through 2007.

Finally, I await the "next big thing". We have been stuck for real innovation on a gross scale for many years, with SOA (which is basically a rehash of older component oriented stories) being the nearest thing in the past couple of years.

Maybe we will see Ajax (maybe as part of a full stack, such as Ruby on Rails) create a marked difference in how users interact with the internet. Maybe we will see social networking create new ways of working on a major scale (rather than what are on the whole small scale instances currently in place). Maybe we will see some major changes in the supplier landscape that will create new, innovative synergies. Here's hoping.

Oh, and yes, I do want world peace as well - it is probably just as likely to happen as some of the things mentioned above.

## About Quocirca

Quocirca is a primary research and analysis company specialising in the business impact of information technology and communications (ITC). With world-wide, native language reach, Quocirca provides in-depth insights into the views of buyers and influencers in large, mid-sized and small organisations. Its analyst team is made up of real-world practitioners with first hand experience of ITC delivery who continuously research and track the industry and its real usage in the markets.

Through researching perceptions, Quocirca uncovers the real hurdles to technology adoption – the personal and political aspects of an organisation's environment and the pressures of the need for demonstrable business value in any implementation. This capability to uncover and report back on the end-user perceptions in the market enables Quocirca to advise on the realities of technology adoption, not the promises.

Quocirca research is always pragmatic, business orientated and conducted in the context of the bigger picture. ITC has the ability to transform businesses and the processes that drive them, but often fails to do so. Quocirca's mission is to help organisations improve their success rate in process enablement through better levels of understanding and the adoption of the correct technologies at the correct time.

Quocirca has a pro-active primary research programme, regularly surveying users, purchasers and resellers of ITC products and services on emerging, evolving and maturing technologies. Over time, Quocirca has built a picture of long term investment trends, providing invaluable information for the whole of the ITC community.

Quocirca works with global and local providers of ITC products and services to help them deliver on the promise that ITC holds for business. Quocirca's clients include Oracle, Microsoft, IBM, Dell, T-Mobile, Vodafone, EMC, Symantec and Cisco, along with other large and medium sized vendors, service providers and more specialist firms.

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