

In the information age, sharing is paramount

Productivity gains center on using tools to identify and leverage the expertise within an organization



Doug Cooper is the Country Manager for Intel Canada

In an age in which productivity is enhanced by the sharing of information, it is no longer realistic to expect employees to work within the paradigm of the industrial era. No longer can a workday be measured by the amount of physical time an employee puts in at the office, nor can we expect the majority of our productivity to be generated between 9:00 and 5:00. "It is important for many employers to enable their employees to work from any place and at any time—especially in knowledge-intensive jobs," said Doug Cooper, the Country Manager for Intel Canada. "Or if a manager sees an employee having a conversation by the water cooler, the old view would assume he's wasting time, while the reality may be that this is the most important conversation he has that day."

But if output can no longer be measured by hours spent at the office or the amount of paper piled on a desk, what is the metric? Intel believes productivity should be judged by results. And technology can help improve the creation of those results.

Though many consider this an era of information overload, IT tools—both hardware and software—exist that not only help manage and share information but which also greatly increase productivity, Cooper said. "But we actually spend the majority of our day chasing information and trying to find the things we need."

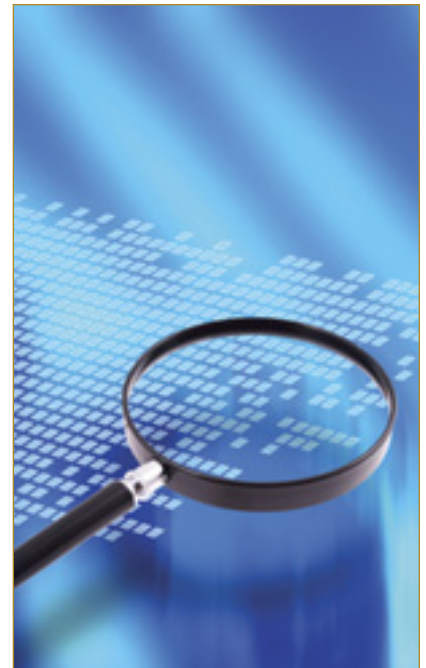
The bulk of the workforce today participates in job categories that use and process information. Though significant amounts of time are expended creating new information, there must be a focus

on sharing and reusing the information already generated. "There are some great tools which make information-sharing much easier, but most businesses do not encourage employees to share best practices and reuse existing knowledge," he said. While some believe information is power and thus are hesitant to share it, it's up to the manager to encourage staffers to share and reuse knowledge and then reward them accordingly.

Collaboration applications

There are a number of tools used by Intel which allow its workers, the majority of which have laptop PCs, to contribute from any location and share knowledge and information within a team, or across the corporation. Microsoft SharePoint is one such Web-based tool that allows a small team to post and update information online. Another set of tools are the Web-based applications designed by 37Signals (www.37signals.com) which provide software for project management and collaboration, contact management, information organization and group chat.

Intel also uses Jive's social community and collaborative software (www.jivesoftware.com), which Cooper said is cost effective for a company and takes collaborative engagement to the next level. It allows sharing of documents, encourages online conversations and grades people based on their level of participation. "This is what Intel calls the engagement funnel," Cooper said. "The more effective the sharing of information within a company, the greater the engagement of the employees." That means blogs and social networks are as important within corporations as they are in the public. Cooper explains that



productivity is now about using tools to help identify pockets of expertise within an organization and then leveraging that expertise through online dialogue. "Data management involves freeing the information and knowledge that exists within a company and then tagging it for further use."

As we continue to generate and share large amounts of information, we need processing power to facilitate this function. Intel doubles the effectiveness of its microprocessor every 18 months, making a suitable level of information management possible. Intel has also created a space for the sharing of information and best practices amongst IT professionals. Through its Open Port Web site (<http://communities.intel.com>) it encourages employees to communicate and share information with their internal and external peers.

"We believe that technology and data management, when used to support and nurture information sharing, will generate an increased return in profitability, allowing corporations to realize their full potential."

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Data through its entire life cycle

KPMG's management process safeguards corporate data from its creation to its eventual destruction



Francis Beaudoin is a partner with KPMG's Risk and Resilience and Operations Improvement Advisory Services practice



Shaun Wilson is a partner with KPMG's Risk and Resilience Advisory Services practice

As businesses continue to collect, gather and generate unprecedented amounts of information, data management—the practices and tools needed to responsibly organize, store and utilize this information—becomes increasingly important and popular in IT departments. Because there is both great value in the data that companies collect and great risk associated with its potential mismanagement, KPMG's Risk and Resilience Advisory Services practice works with businesses to implement various programs and oversee the responsible management of data throughout the entirety of what it calls the Seven-Stage Life Cycle.

As articulated in the media with increasing frequency, there have recently been a series of high-profile cases involving the theft of sensitive customer information and credit card numbers. Because businesses today are facing much broader issues when it comes to handling data, KPMG now provides information protection services, which expands upon their former information security services. Information protection not only covers access control and security but also takes into account industry-specific requirements and standards in terms of data gathering, usage, storage, transfer, archiving and destruction.

"When dealing with valuable data there are a number of specific require-

ments which vary depending on what business you're in, what the information is and how you intend to use it," said Shaun Wilson, a partner with KPMG's Risk and Resilience Advisory Services. "Business requirements come first, followed by other externally imposed factors such as regulatory requirements, legal requirements and industry-specific requirements."

For many organizations a primary reason to implement a good data management program is to protect the privacy of customers and clients. According to KPMG's research conducted on American Fortune 1000 companies, the key privacy-related concerns shared by most companies are reputation damage and customer loss, followed by litigation and class action and, finally, compliance failure. For these companies "It's a matter of protecting their brand, reputation and image", says Francis Beaudoin, a partner with KPMG's Risk and Resilience and Operations Improvement Advisory Services practice.

"Government organizations would have, in my opinion, a similar profile to these Fortune 1000 companies in terms of a concern for reputation damage," Wilson said. "They view a lot of these information protection requirements as a way of safeguarding the reputation of the organization, whatever that organization may be."

While KPMG encourages businesses to implement data management practices in order to prevent the loss or misuse of information, the company does maintain a forensic practice that steps in to conduct investigations when disaster strikes.

But data management isn't only about risk prevention and security. In

fact, when managed and used effectively, corporate data can be extremely useful in improving business intelligence and adding value to an organization. "This requires having the information accessible in ways that are useful to your organization and what you are trying to accomplish," Wilson said. "It's really about obtaining the maximum value from the information you collect."

"For example, retailers use the data mining process to understand and analyze trends and sales patterns," Beaudoin said. "The information gathered at the point of sale becomes extremely valuable when it comes to making buying decisions on the back-end."

Followed by storage and archiving, the final stage in the information lifecycle



which KPMG consults on is destruction. This phase ensures that archived data no longer useful to the organization is destroyed in a secure and complete manner, preventing it from getting into the wrong hands.

"It's important that businesses realize how valuable data is as an asset and not underestimate the efforts required to manage it properly," Beaudoin said.

For more information please visit: www.kpmg.ca or call 514.840.2247 (Francis) or 604.691.3188 (Shaun).

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KPMG's approach to data management

KPMG's network of professionals in 145 countries provides a full range of data management advisory services with a multidisciplinary approach that uses formalized regulatory, forensic, and technology methodologies. We help our clients understand, prioritize, and control the risks associated with the use, transfer, storage, or management of critical information assets. Managing and controlling information can be key to critical decisions and process integrity, making a world of difference in your business universe.

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