



The Future Direction and Role of CIOs



Interview by Helen Winsor, **IQPC Exchange**

Prior to his presentation at the forthcoming Corporate IT Exchange 2012, to be held on the 16th – 18th September in Germany, IQPC Exchange caught up with Dr. Bill Limond, CIO of City of London to discuss the future direction and role of CIOs and their departments. Bill will be sharing more insights in the panel discussion on '2012 and Beyond - What Does the Future Hold for a CIO and Their Departments?' at the Exchange in September.

IQPC Exchange: Hello, and welcome to this IQP Exchange podcast. Ahead of his presentation at the forthcoming Corporate IT Exchange 2012, to be held on 16th to 18th September in Germany, Dr Bill Limond, CIO of the City of London, is going to discuss a little about the future direction and role of CIOs and their departments. Bill will be sharing more insights in the panel discussion on 2012 and Beyond – What Does the Future Hold for a CIO and Their Departments at the Exchange in September.

But now we're going to just ask him a few questions ahead of the event. So Bill, thank you very much for your time today. At the forthcoming Exchange you'll be participating in a session discussing the role of the CIO in the future. In your career you've had various IT roles in both public and private sector organisations. So, in your experience, Bill, what are the major changes the role of the CIO has actually gone through?

B Limond: Hello, Helen. Good morning to you. Thanks for this. Yes, I think one of the main changes is that it moves more into what I'd call the real CIO role. In other words, that it's focusing as much on the information management as on the IT, i.e. the technology and the system management. So it's what I call moving up the value chain. The value chain is the technology, the IT to build the systems, but what are the systems doing? The systems are essentially managing information and streamlining business processes. So, for instance, the mission that we've created at the City of London, and I have done before, the Mission is really around facilitating and improving cost effectively: first of all, the management and communication of information, the streamlining of business processes to create a knowledge sharing organisation.

So that's the focus, if you like, the Mission, and that's the way that I've seen the role of the CIO move from being purely an IT director or manager into being an information manager in the broader sense of the word. And that is around the management of information as an asset. Information is probably, if not the most, certainly one of the most important and valuable assets that any organisation has, so that's where I see the main role changing and the way it has changed over the years. So it's moving up that value chain, as I said, from IT to IS into IM and really acting as the guardian, if you like, of that value chain. How do you add value to the organisation through the management, the information management value chain? So that's where I see the main trends and the main change.

IQPC Exchange: Yes, thank you. Now, Bill, can you tell me a little bit more about the projects that you're currently focusing on in your organisation? And also, what are your priorities for the next two to five years looking ahead?

B Limond: Yes. Actually, one of those fits in very well. The first priority really is connecting with the business, so ensuring that we're actually delivering what the business needs. So we've gone through a major re-organisation and focusing on business solutions, so what are the business needs? It's the, WHAT does the business need? And the other thing which I found in talking to the heads of departments is that they were critical of us not engaging at a strategic enough level for what does the business need, and then what is the STRATEGY? How are you going to deliver it?

So that's the WHAT and the HOW, and then beefing up the DELIVERY of programmes and projects, so the programme and project side of the equation. And those are the sides which we've really focused on and reorganised into those particular areas and enhancing and increasing the ability which we've got to relate to the business. So business and relationship management, focusing on the business solutions, how do you deliver the strategy, the architecture, etc, and then actually improving and building up the programme and project delivery capability in the organisation.

Now, remember I mentioned information management. One of the major tools which we are using to improve information management is Microsoft's SharePoint 2010 – that's the new version of Microsoft SharePoint and CRM products. So that's focusing on using SharePoint as an information management tool and CRM obviously for the customer relationship management side and creating an information management strategy, but also delivering programmes and projects through that. So, for instance, we've been using SharePoint to deliver a new intranet, so that's the internally focused portal, if you like, and a new website which is just in the process of being delivered. But also, SharePoint is a very versatile product so we've used that, for instance, for business intelligence, using Performance Point, and also as a collaboration tool between different departments.

So a lot of emphasis on using and delivering SharePoint and CRM, likewise for contacts and contact management with clients and citizen management, relationship management through the use of CRM, and we were quite advanced in the use of CRM. So that's a major focus, if you like, and there's been a lot of work that's gone on, on infrastructure and virtualisation and good things like that, and Voice Over IP and unified communications, but a big part of the thrust is in looking at the use of SharePoint in its broadest sense. It's a very versatile and powerful product, so a lot of the projects and programmes are around that.

IQPC Exchange: Absolutely. Thank you. Now, IT business alignment is more important today than ever as technology creates opportunities for an organisation to grow. It allows you to win new customers and increase internal efficiencies.

B Limond: Absolutely agree with that.

IQPC Exchange: Yes. So, Bill, how do you see the IT business relationship evolving in the next two to five years? And also, what are the internal and external challenges that the CIO will need to tackle in your view?

B Limond: Absolutely. As I said earlier, one of the things which we're enhancing is the whole of the business relationship management side and the change management side. So we've, if you like, split the organisation into four chunks. One is around the WHAT. What does the business need? What are the business solutions? And increase the business relationship management capability that we have, as well as the contact capability, and also the information management part. So we put that into the WHAT does the business need, if you like, and also change management, so enhance the change management capability. And also, at the same time, we split it into four chunks, so that's the what, that's the business relationship management, but at the same time we've got to enhance the STRATEGIC side of that so that we're engaging with the business at the strategic level and not just on a day-to-day operational level.

So putting a lot of focus on strategy and architecture, and I see a lot of organisations actually and trying to get hold of enterprise architects these days is extremely difficult. So strategy and then enhancing the programme project capability, professionalising that, if you like, so

ensuring the people are aware of and qualified in things like Prince 2 and MSP, which is managing successful programmes, and also introducing a Gateway Review process. I also do Gateway Reviews at the government level, so for mission critical, high-risk government programmes, not just purely IT of course, but across the board. I do Gateway Reviews as a team leader for those, and then professionalising, if you like, the customer service. So the fourth area of the organisation is the professionalization of customer service and through things like ITIL, the ITIL process as a framework and a methodology and people are qualified in that.

But you're absolutely right, Helen, the focus has got to be on what does the business need, therefore strengthening that relationship both through the enhancement of the business relationship management function, the change function, the information management function. Also, it has to be at a strategic level as well as a purely operational service level on a day-to-day basis. It's also got to be at that strategic level, so all of the overall enterprise architectures or the information architectures, and we've actually set up information. So the governance throughout the organisation is important, getting the buy-in of the senior executives in the organisation. So we've done that through a strategy board, an information management governance board, reference groups and liaison groups.

So connecting into the business at the various different levels, chief officer at a strategic level, finance officers within each of the individual departments within the reference group, then liaison officers, which is a more operational level, but connecting in, because in each of those four areas that I talked about – the WHAT, the HOW, the DO, i.e. DELIVER, and the RUN – each of those has got to connect in with the client, albeit perhaps at different levels. So that's the main thrust of the model, if you like, and that's the way that we've got to connect into business, because if we don't connect in with the business, then the question is, well, what is the relevance of the IT or the information management department?

There is a role in there; the CIO role is actually to ensure that we deliver what the business needs in terms of information management and business process streamlining. So that's the role of the CIO and I think it strengthens it because it puts, if you like, it puts the CIO at the same level as the CFO in the organisation. What does the CFO look after? The CFO looks after obviously finance. The CEO looks after the executives. The COO looks after the operations, but the CIO really has the role of the governance of the information asset, like the CFO has the role of the governance of the finance asset within the organisation. So that's where I see it going and that's how we've changed the organisation, how we're focusing on trying to deliver what the business needs.

IQPC Exchange: Some very valid points there. Thank you. Well, thanks very much, Dr Limond, for your insight today and we look forward to hearing more from you in the panel discussion in September. Thank you.

B Limond: Thank you very much indeed, Helen. You have a good day.

IQPC Exchange: Thank you.

B Limond: Bye for now.

IQPC Exchange: Just for the benefit of our listeners, if you would like to learn more on this subject and attend the Corporate IT Exchange, it's due to take place from 16th to 18th September in Germany. For information about the agenda and the other speakers that we've got on board for this event, you can visit www.corporateitexchange.com where there is also more information and further interviews, podcasts, articles and videos. Also, if you would like to contact our enquiries team for information, you can contact them via 0207 368 9745 or email exchangeinfo@iqpc.com. Thanks very much for listening. I hope you enjoyed today's show and we hope to see you at the event.

The Corporate IT Exchange will take place from 16th – 18th September in Germany. For further information about this event please visit www.corporateitexchange.com, call +44 (0) 207 368 9745 or email exchangeinfo@iqpc.com now!

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