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## If ROI Wasn't the Driving Concern ...

Posted by meggebrecht - 2009/11/05 13:53

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There's no doubt that return on investment has always been -- and will always be -- a major concern for an organization, which is as it should be. But it's clear to all that the current environment has made ROI a more immediate and pressing concern. Spending on IT without the promise of a quick payoff? Not likely.

Now, I doubt very much that there are CIOs and IT managers out there who would condone throwing money on new technology that isn't going to save their company money -- or increase efficiency somewhere down the line. But if quick ROI became less of an enterprise-wide priority tomorrow, how would it affect your IT priorities? Would BI and virtualization still be the be-all-and-end-all? Or would you turn toward mobility initiatives, security, bolstering your staff, or finally buying some new hardware?

In other words, money is less of an object. So where do you spend it?

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## Re:If ROI Wasn't the Driving Concern ...

Posted by scarr - 2009/11/10 11:18

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I put a larger percentage of my budget into training and cross training my staff to make sure their skills are current and they are all able to multitask and take on more responsibility during their tenure with me. Server virtualization is also a growing source of corporate investment.

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## Re:If ROI Wasn't the Driving Concern ...

Posted by yoonsie - 2009/12/07 03:13

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I'm no IT leader but if I were, I would dream of a world where companies didn't measure results in quarters because, as IT leaders know, technology implementation doesn't manifest payoff on such a schedule. So if I had the ROI burden lifted, I would probably focus more attention to developing my staff and individual professional development. Beyond keeping their technology expertise current, I would work on programs that would show them where their work fits within the company and train them in conflict resolution and other communication-related skills.

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## Re:If ROI Wasn't the Driving Concern ...

Posted by pgalen - 2009/12/08 10:45

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I try to allocate an increasing portion of my budget to employee retention, skill enhancement, and motivational techniques so that my staff knows how important their performance is and is in alignment with overall company objectives.

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## Re:If ROI Wasn't the Driving Concern ...

Posted by caragarretson - 2010/05/20 13:33

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I find the conversation of ROI and security a particularly interesting one, because there really is no ROI for security except that perhaps the network didn't suffer a breach, or suffered fewer than it would have otherwise. With ROI such a driving force these days, I feel for the CSOs who must try and justify their technology acquisitions to the numbers people.

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## Re:If ROI Wasn't the Driving Concern ...

Posted by newsccctv - 2010/08/27 03:31

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plus size wedding dresses[/URL

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### Re:If ROI Wasn't the Driving Concern ...

Posted by Mel Duvall - 2010/09/14 16:06

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I've always admired the way companies like 3M have inspired employees to think outside the box and come up with new products or business opportunities - like the 3M sticky note - that may not be core to the business.

In that spirit, I would like to see more companies set up opportunity labs or skunkworks projects, where employees can share in the rewards for their creative and innovative thinking.

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### Re:If ROI Wasn't the Driving Concern ...

Posted by sediga - 2010/09/15 14:26

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I am not sure if this question can truly be answered. This is simply because there have been no situations in our lives that some sort of an ROI was not measured. In school, your ROI are your grades. In your personal life, your ROI is sheer "happiness"; whatever that may be. At work, your ROI these days is simply having a job. I am of the mindset that there is no reason for people to do good or be good, they won't be.

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### Re:If ROI Wasn't the Driving Concern ...

Posted by Mel Duvall - 2010/10/05 18:46

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Jonathan Reichental, the CIO of O'Reilly Media, wrote an enlightening column recently about the importance of being able to look beyond ROI and the daily demands of being a CIO and see the big picture. The most important thing a CIO can do, he maintains, is inspire and help create a tech vision.

"It turns out that inspiring staff by creating a vision and strategy for technology is one of the lowest costs, yet most effective things a CIO can do," he said. "A vision that produces positive results reminds everyone why we do this in the first place."

Reichental makes the argument that while it may be difficult to peg an ROI on it, inspiring others has considerable value - and it feels great.

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### Re:If ROI Wasn't the Driving Concern ...

Posted by ciony - 2010/10/11 17:21

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I think that the practice that Google engages in of allowing employees a percentage of their time to pursue personal research projects touches on a lot of the themes in the responses to this question. A vision of innovation and constant improvement is espoused by dedicating time to these values, and this practice undoubtedly serves as an aid in retention. Even though ROI is not the driving concern, they have been fairly effective at driving some returns from this practice as

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well. Overall I think it's a policy which serves a lot of desirable objectives.

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### Re:If ROI Wasnâ€™t the Driving Concern ...

Posted by Mel Duvall - 2010/10/11 21:48

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Google is a great example. The reports out this week that Google is testing a technology that allows cars to drive themselves, is another demonstration of how it is willing to explore the boundaries and invest in innovation. As you state, they might not have a firm ROI case for the driverless car today, but who knows what benefits may be derived down the road.

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### Re:If ROI Wasnâ€™t the Driving Concern ...

Posted by sediga - 2010/11/08 15:48

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Google is a rare example. Look at the market today; jobless is high, people are still not really happy with their jobs or scared about losing their jobs; companies are still cutting back both in spending and IT; etc, etc. While google is a good example of what companies should do, if you sit down with any executive these days and you actually get them to speak candidly, they would tell you that they are not sure if they are going to be around in 5 years. And if they are not thinking that way, I would wonder why. I would say that it all comes down to ROI; now more than ever, and probably for a very very long future.

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### Re:If ROI Wasnâ€™t the Driving Concern ...

Posted by Bill Wilson - 2010/11/09 07:46

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I have always thought that our role as CIOs is best served if we keep a customer centric focus on everything we do and making sure their needs are best filled by our efforts.. Whether it is making sure that the applications are end user friendly and responsive or running an efficient and helpful help desk always make sure we do the right thing for the customer at the right time..

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