

MIT CIO Symposium Part 1 - CEO Keynote/Panel

It's always great to feel stupid, it means there is some great stuff to learn and then you feel smarter.

Attending the MIT CIO Symposium and hearing from some of the great speakers, I feel pretty stupid.

The first half of the day is keynotes in the big room. (Tip: power outlets are on the outside of the room).

CEOs came out first.

Bob Brennan from Iron Mountain (great IT company - Records Management, Data Protection, Document Management, etc) and said CIO's should be strategists.

CIO should should stick to "business arguments" not "technical arguments" otherwise he will "lose interest".

Alan Trefler from Pegasystems hit a variety of topics and echoed the business value proposition from IT, focus on the R in the ROI. CIOs need to be strategic and execute.

James Champy from Perot Systems has an interesting title, he is their Chairman of Consulting. He thinks most CEOs may not be paying attention unless something breaks.

He may be viewing computing as a utility, when water doesn't come out of the kitchen sink is when you worry about water.

Champy brought up an interesting concept of an "over capacity climate" and I agree - our CPUs are faster than our software, our disks are bigger than our storage needs and with SSD may be faster than our throughput needs.

The fear is that business leaders may percieve the "over capacity" as unnecessary or over-spending. It's like having a stack of expensive toner cartridges vs. using a leaner supply chain. There needs to be capacity in the system for growth and burstable but diligently managed. The best infrastructure is worthless if the business fails.

Joseph Alsop former CEO of Progress Software spoke about high percentage of the IT investment the cost of maintaining the existing IT and the lower percentage or new development. He was a big advocate of "stamping out diversity" or consolidating systems to help reduce IT costs of running the business.

Great session - good kick off to the day.