News

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Information technology industry failing to keep up with businesses

Arabian Computer News 100 panel reveals it is a misconception that IT is moving too fast

BUSINESS

UAE BUSINESS LEADERS have agreed that IT innovations are moving slower than business development. At the Arabian Computer News 100 conference this week, Saji Oommen, GM Group IT, Al Batha Group said that companies would like to fully invest in cloud computing, but the technology is not yet up to standard.

"I personally do not think technology is going so fast, in fact there is always a gap - companies would like to get cloud computing yesterday because they can scale up fast, but the problem is cloud computing is far from maturity. I think business is moving faster that IT," he said.

Jan Hichert, CEO of Astaro agreed that IT is slow saying that innovation is on a 'by decade' basis. "Innovation in the network security market is happening on a 'by decade' basis, in terms of the broader technology, I think it would be more comfortable for us as a small company if there was more change."

Mario Zambas, CIO of Yas Marina Circuit was less sure about the lag between IT development and business development, but did agree that there was a lag. "IT is possibly lagging behind, but don't go chasing the latest technology unless it works with your business. Don't get carried away with the latest things."

He added that as soon as one new technology comes out, there is one to better it, i.e. the iPad and now the iPad 2, so it is better to

The panel session on cloud computing led to heated discussions between the various CIOs.

wait until the technology has matured before jumping on the bandwagon.

Naushad Kermalli, deputy general manager ITO Strategy and Group Operations Processing at Emirates NBD said that particularly in the banking sector, CIOs must ensure that the new technology fully fits in with the corporate vision and business plan. "The development of IT has to be linked to the business strategy and the type of deployment that you do really depends on the maturity level of an organisation. We hear of a lot of IT products out there and can be quite creative about how we can use that, but unless, in the banking sector, you have thoroughly checked what this application is, it becomes very difficult to deploy and later on begin to worry about it."

Kermalli added however that if IT decisions are left in the hands of the business unit in the company, the business will end up lagging behind in technology due to an abundance of caution. "The standard we have adopted in Emirates NBD Bank is that IT comes in with innovative solutions and then explains how this technology helps, and then we put it under test. We are constantly in liaison with IT and business."

He added that many banks, in their haste to upgrade to new technologies, do not realise that the applications they currently have are able to be upgraded and expanded to do the job of the new applications. "We are all out there finding new applications, but if you look at [what you have already] you find out you have so much there and can avoid disrupting the business by introducing something new. It is time to be identifying better usage and innovation of existing applications."

> "Companies would like to get cloud computing yesterday, because they can scale up fast, but the problem is that cloud is far from maturity."