

Improving bottomlines key focus of CIOs in FY14: E&Y

Most info officers work towards enhancing customer experience

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IMPROVING the bottom line is the key focus for Indian CIOs (chief information officers) in financial year 2013-14, according to an Ernst & Young and CIO Klub study, which in its fifth edition covered 180 CIOs from various companies across major industries.

The findings of the survey over the last five years also highlight how CIO priorities have changed in response to the fluctuating economic scenario globally and in India. If in 2009, cost reduction was a priority with shrinking markets and declining demand, in 2010, the mood was cautiously optimistic in tandem with visible growth for the year ahead. In 2011, in spite of the slowdown, the mood was optimistic and organisations planned to take the plunge for large IT investments. However, due to continued uncertain economic environment, the focus in 2012 shifted to create a lean, agile and resilient IT function, the studies revealed.

This year the focus has shifted outward and CIOs are concentrating on bringing value to the business. While CIOs generally help businesses improve the top line, the current economic volatility is pushing them to look within and help businesses increase their bottom line.

"The balance of power is shifting to customers as consumerisation of technology gains momentum. More than 60 per cent of the CIOs plan to focus on customer-



GROWING PRESSURE: Due to continued uncertain economic environment, the focus in 2012 shifted to creating a lean, agile and resilient IT function, reveals E&Y survey

centric initiatives thereby enhancing the customer experience and providing them with easy and effective interface to collaborate with the business. Customer-centricity in turn is closely linked to customer relationship management, social media and enterprise mobility," says Devendra Parulekar, advisory partner, Ernst & Young.

"The CEO cockpit view of the business is expected to drive mobility evolution and about 62 per cent of organisations are likely to implement, upgrade or evaluate mobile applications in the coming year," says Shirish Gariba, president, CIO Klub.

The study revealed that CIOs are working more and more towards enhancing the customer experience. Additionally, this IT enablement agenda is likely to be driven by business intelligence, analytics, budgeting,

planning, consolidation, business workflows and mobile-based applications.

Cloud is expected to bridge the gap between consumerisation of technology and the traditional enterprise application world. Increasing number of businesses are moving into the virtual world, supported by new technologies and driven by the need to lower their IT infrastructure and administrative costs while adopting a flexible and scalable model for IT, a statement from Ernst & Young said.

Though adoption of cloud services has gained impetus, the progress is still slow. This is not surprising, as the number of risks and challenges identified by respondents have remained fairly consistent over the years. Like any other transformational initiative, adoption of cloud also faces internal resistance as handing over the IT infrastructure

and data security controls is an inherently uncomfortable situation for most senior managements. Another decisive factor for the slow adoption is the increased bandwidth and network costs that somewhat neutralises the savings in internal infrastructure costs.

Mobile applications deployment is expected to gain momentum in 2013-14, with around 62 per cent of respondents likely to implement, upgrade or evaluate mobile applications in the coming year. More than 35 per cent of the respondents, who have either implemented or are evaluating enterprise mobility with BYOD, are expected to consider mobile device management (MDM) and network access control (NAC) technologies to protect corporate data and mitigate the risk of unauthorised disclosure, the statement added.

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