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# R&P Newsletter

We talk about:

Message: 1<sup>st</sup> Newsletter 2008, Web 2.0, IT Strategy in practice, Business Communication Overload, What's on in 2008?, Gong Xi Fa Cai!

Volume 1/2008

January 2008

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## A message from Reppel & Partners Pte Ltd

### Dear Reader!

It is my pleasure to present you with the first edition of our newsletter in 2008.

As the term 'Newsletter' implies, we have something to share: With the start of 2008 we have been able to find the talent we were looking for to improve our capabilities and capacities:



With Nora Roesch, René Lindner and Umesh Kalanke, we were able to get highly skilled professionals on board possessing a sound track record ideally suited for the opportunities we are currently exploiting.

We have started the implementation of our largest project so far building up a Shared Services / Insourcing Center with regional coverage for a MNC headquartered

in Europe.

A further interesting development we observe is that more and more of our clients base their internal processes on a sound process documentation and organize the workflow on Microsoft's SharePoint



system. We have the good fortune to be able to supply our clients with a growing .NET/Visual Studio programming capability allowing them to use easy ad-hoc workflows while maintaining proper traces.

But enough about us for the moment!

What can you expect from this edition of our newsletter? We want to give you an easy-reading introduction into what Web 2.0 really can mean for you.

From our Strategy practice we share some insights on a business-aligned IT Strategy we recently concluded.

I give my personal opinion of what will be hot in business IT in 2008. I know, there is a dime a dozen augurs out there, who try their hand on projecting the future...My claim for fame to do so is, that I want to apply some common sense to it.

A problem we get confronted every now and then by Senior Executives is the constant threat of information overload. We try our hand on providing some high-level insights and welcome all feedback on this topic from you as well as all other segments of our letter.

And finally, for all our friends and business partners in Asia, I conclude with my best wishes for the oncoming Year of the Earthen Rat. May you and your business show all the positive traits the Rat shows in the Chinese Zodiac!

**Frank Reppel, Managing Partner.**





We cannot escape the social networks, blogs, wikis, folksonomies, etc.

But only the winners will know how to make use of web 2.0.

#### 5 Reasons why Businesses should deploy Web 2.0:

1. To encourage a culture of information-sharing and collaboration.
2. To appeal to the creative energy of social networking behavior.
3. To provide a forum for cross-organizational discussions.
4. To stimulate innovation and leverage knowledge.
5. To create transparent "corporate memory".

To talk to our experts please call +65.6440.6276 or send an email to: [contact@ReppelAndPartners.com](mailto:contact@ReppelAndPartners.com)

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## Web 2.0—How the new communication tools can be used in the corporate world

Web interaction models have changed considerably in recent years due to emerging technologies coupled with enriched internet applications. It is generally agreed that web 2.0 is here to stay, describing a new generation of web-based communities and hosted services, like **social networking sites, blogs, wikis and folksonomies** that put new emphasis on the web as a platform and aim at facilitating collaboration and sharing between users.

Web 2.0 tools nowadays make their way into the corporate world, but to what extend do businesses need these technologies?

Many are concerned about security issues and possible "time wasting" regarding the use of Web 2.0 platforms, but when you are a company with an open social character and a focus on a knowledge-based organization you will benefit from the new ways of communication possibilities.

IDC provides some examples how enterprises can take advantage of the upcoming trends in Web 2.0:

- Knowledge sharing with corporate blogs and corporate wikis
- Second Life® as a business strategy
- Speed, convenience and flexibility of instant messaging
- Easy collaboration spaces
- Dynamic business models
- Enriching user interface

Another interesting aspect of Web 2.0 is that the tools required to do something are predominantly open source. This makes the initial cost to kick-start something limited and allows for a somewhat uncoordinated (aka creative) approach to it.

Once your company has started on this journey, an unpleasant reality

might set in. This is due on one side to the fact that the feedback coming in through blogs, feedback sites and IM threads is unfiltered! A moderator might be needed here.

On the other side, the direction in this highly creative process probably will not be what the management has initially envisaged. So open mindedness is critical here.

For those who want to start in a 'safer' area, knowledge sharing is maybe the way to go. Here, intra-company social networks are an ideal way of allowing for that, but again some moderation might be needed to even out the playing field.

**Opportunities:** Employing these rapidly 'mainstream-becoming' technologies is a must as a means of engaging all stakeholders. Web 2.0 offers all the tools that are needed to not only gather the information that is fleeting within an organization. It is also providing an ideal platform to engage with the user-base in a proactive fashion. For a first time it is possible to receive a 360° feedback on all 'stakeholder-engaging' aspects of an operation.

**Challenges:** Businesses that decide to use Web 2.0 as a platform need to keep a close eye on the security aspects of doing so. One of the biggest challenges is to establish policies and procedures that guide people in the proper use of these tools as well as reducing possible security risks coming with them.

**In Summary:** The implementation of selected Web 2.0 tools will become an inevitable necessity for keeping up with the pace. The winners will know how to select the right tools and make use of the possibilities without compromising other important aspects, such as security and liability issues. For this, a collective collaboration effort is needed to guide the people involved in the effective use of such a powerful technology gearbox.

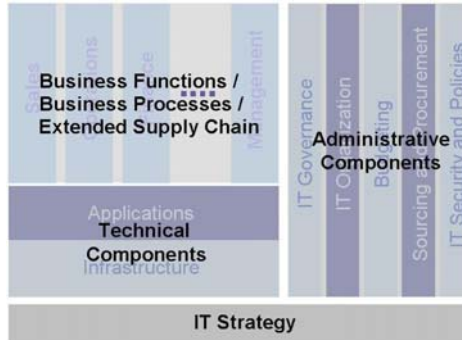


**Important steps to a successful IT Strategy:**

1. Start with a thorough analysis of your business!
2. Do an IT situation analysis based on business criteria
3. Envisage your future business
4. Define a clear planning process
5. Devise the IT Strategy
6. Build a stringent implementation roadmap

**IT Strategy—Just a technology road map?**

If you are reading IT Strategy, then chances are that you can expect a technology play by one of the major hardware



vendors or a self-serving promise of one of the myriads of possible 'Outsourcing' partners.

How can one devise such an important piece of overall strategy, while avoiding these traps? Using the high-level process as prescribed on the left, conduct a thorough analysis of all influencing factors. This can lead to the components in the above picture.

After conducting a detailed business analysis the goal and possible ways to it are defined as in the picture below.

"IT as a competitive advantage" must be the mantra of every CIO today. As there are many ways, intermediate targets should be fixed, serving as a roadmap on the way to the ideal. The first initial targets are probably already reached and can then be used as benchmarks.



The eventual result should address all building blocks/components initially defined. Furthermore it must provide a set of metrics against which the implementation success can then be measured.

Not forgetting that this has an impact on the existing governance model, it is possible to make strategic statements on each component leading in their entirety to a comprehensive, business-based IT Strategy.

**Some of our capabilities:**

1. CIO Services and ICT Management
2. IT Strategy Consulting
3. Request for Proposal (RFP) development
4. Shared Service Center concepts for Asia
5. MS SharePoint/.NET programming
6. Vendor Selection & Management
7. Business IT consultation...

**Opinion: So, Frank, what's in store 2008?**

The vendors will trumpet:

- Green IT
- Apple iPhone in Asia
- Service Oriented Architecture (SOA)
- Social network computing

The business reality will be:

- Driving towards IT as a business differentiator
- Increased cost pressure on IT
- Customer-orientation
- Pretty much the same as in 2007....

As the technology field is quite exhausted at the moment, the wider area of corporate social responsibility (which in itself is a vast field) comes into play. With that vendors are trying to position themselves more as catering to the soft values in soci-

ety. That way they try to get more in the heads of their potential customers, while at the same time touting the possible cost savings of 'Green IT'.

It is in itself a great initiative in my opinion, but has to be carefully analyzed because unfortunately it is a field where claims can easily be staked without having the proper titles...

I generally see the trend more into seeking answers on 'How can IT actually help my business growing or becoming more effective'. This is not new but not yet sufficiently addressed!

Possible answers are Unified Communications.

And finally: Do expect a lot of vendors on the hardware, as well as on the software and services side to drive more aggressively into the SMB market, which might also help MNCs integrating their subsidiaries more efficiently.



**Ways to beat back business communication overload:**

1. Develop an information management strategy that works for you!
2. Filter information!
3. Attempt to identify quality data!
4. Don't attempt to examine every piece of data available!
5. Get Email under control
6. Don't let information take control of you, take control!

## Business Communication Overload—Is there Hope?

With the use of new technologies the volume of internal communication in companies has increased dramatically in the past years. Many executives and managers report receiving too much regular communication resulting in an information overload, which means they have too much information for making a decision or remaining informed about a topic.

Nevertheless, no one doubts that e-mail, mobile phones and instant messaging are capable of raising productivity, but they only do so if we control them, not vice versa. What then is the key to effective communication in the new technology age?

In order to communicate effectively it is crucial to develop skills for managing the information overload. Make sure that those most affected by the communication are involved, while saving others from wasting their time e.g. keeping them off the cc-list in

mails or out of conference calls. Your mantra must be: right information for the right people. It is thus obvious that selectivity is a vital point in coping with the increasing volume of communication; sparing others the flooding with irrelevant information. In addition, recipients themselves need to take control of the information coming their way by establishing boundaries and deadlines. Furthermore, a focus on the quality of information itself is needed, although determining the quality can be challenging.

Using the right approach, there is hope to overcoming business communication overload and a number of businesses seem to cope quite well. Many managers say that the effectiveness of communication between departments has increased in recent years especially in small companies.

To get some tips on effective communication take a look at the list on the left.

## Chinese New Year Greetings

*Dear Client,  
Partner,  
and Friend,*

*Wishing you  
a prosperous,  
healthy and  
successful  
Year of the  
Rat*

*From the  
team of  
Reppel &  
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Ltd*



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**What you can expect from 'German Quality' we provide in an Asia context!**