

Tech Analysis

Cracking Info Strategy

MUHAMMAD H KAFI

An information strategy is essential for any organisation as it sets out the delivery mechanism, information flow and ownership of items such as text, data, voice, image and intelligence.

Institutions must first agree on their information strategy before embarking on sophisticated data warehousing or business intelligence (BI) projects, or even strategic operational applications like ERP or Banking.

So, the information strategy must be drawn in light of the business strategy reflecting the needs of all, not confining only to senior management or to the board.

Early concept of business

The thinking line should advocate smooth delivery of information to compliment quick decision-making. However most people tend to get bogged down with technology, tools and analytics. This should be avoided.

Care should be taken while developing strategies to consider not only technological needs, but also human needs. Keeping in mind corporate goals and objectives, the information strategy should identify and provide definitive guidelines as to what happens with redundant data, ownership of any piece of data, their origin and definition. Then there are security and update rules for business logic while transforming and the knowledge as to what data to be cleansed.

fragmentation and duplication. This aims to reduce the overall operational costs for development and support.

The information strategy should identify, after consulting with major users, the information requirements, delivery mechanisms, security and administration and technology platforms to ensure that the strategy is future-proof and robust.

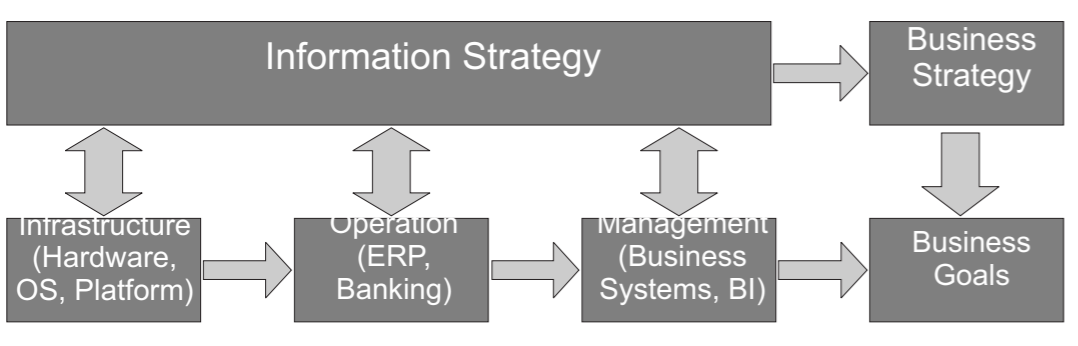
One wonders, given the need to have information strategy beforehand, about the prudent role of strategic planning process for large corporations. One also feels dysfunctional and certainly amused by the technological hype and gimmick with which even non-technical decision makers have associated themselves like online-banking,

So how do we do that? Well strategic planning is more of a process; some may use it as a management tool for performing a better job by ensuring that employees are focused to achieve common goals and objectives. It may help formulate corporate mission, vision, values, goals, objectives and roles & responsibilities for timely implementation.

For an institution wanting to draw up an ICT plan, the need for an on-going strategic planning process is enormous. Knowing that typically strategic planning is all about shaping the future with perceived and unknown circumstances, it is then imperative for strategic planners to think and draw up clear guidelines for effective utilization of tools and techniques. They typically do that by analyzing past experience and comparing that with present and future plans. This helps devise a few do's and don'ts to cope with future events.

Institutions wanting to embark on strategic ICT project should do their homework first before selecting hardware, software or communications needs. The overall needs should be based on corporate objectives supported by a clearly defined ICT policy that came out of strategic planning process.

For banking institutions an expensive software implemented without a business strategy for customer centric corporate culture complemented by a delivery focused value-based customer service mentality may not bring much value to its customers, internal or external.



intelligence advocated only the decision makers on the recipient end; today's theory also empowers people involved in a company's front-line operations. This approach has led not only to identify 'decision makers' within the company, but also the 'power users' working in operations. The benefit vis-à-vis in this approach allows more timely and prompt action on problems identified from BI reports, compared to lost opportunities from the board pack, which usually are a few days old.

It then sets a baseline for the decision makers and power users, throughout the organization, for the validity and definition of metadata. For a company's working to implement BI or mission-critical ERP or Banking projects, this will enhance the acceptance of data.

Most institutions usually have multiple systems for multiple business units. The presence of legacy applications is also prominent. An information strategy will establish clear guidelines preventing data

anywhere-banking etc. The technology vendors surely will feel better about this savvy environment where there is less room for marketing product features!

Is this awareness based on clearly articulated objectives with specific business benefits listed and at least an approximate rate of return calculation? If the answer is yes then excellent news. Otherwise strategic planning process may find it difficult to obtain true benefit from technology.

Muhammad H Kafi is the Chief Technical Officer of Southtech Limited

Tech News

Introducing wisdompinkpages.org

STAR TECH DESK

Now you can have access to information on any educational institute in Bangladesh from your computer. Wisdom Pink Pages, the first ever online education directory of Bangladesh is just a click away.

www.wisdompinkpages.org was launched recently.

At present the site is inviting information. The directory information will be available at the site within a short period.

The site will contain information about all education related institutions including universities, colleges, schools, coaching centres, IT-training centres, swimming schools, driving schools, cooking schools etc. The information comprises databases of publishers, stationary suppliers, book suppliers and all sorts of industries, which have direct interests in the education sector.

The directory will contain name, address and phone numbers. Moreover, any

institution looking to have a separate identity or presence in the site can have a portal link up to their own site.

At present the site is offering free online registration. The form can be filled up by anyone who has interest in the education sector mentioning clearly the category of his or her institution.

As students from different parts of Bangladesh come mainly to Dhaka and Chittagong, they can simply log on to this site and get a first hand information regarding where to go. This site will be the appropriate solution-manager for students of all ages for any query or information.

The CEO of Wisdom, Asif Mahub Karim, himself has been involved in the education sector for more than a decade now.

Asif felt the lack of a consolidated and planned database in the sector, which subsequently inspired him to take the initiative. Asif hopes that in this age of information super highway, this website will play a vital role.

WISDOM PINK PAGES
(a concern of Marsha Wisdom Group)

- Message from CEO
- Information on PINK Pages
- WISDOM PINK PAGES
- Online Registration
- Advertising Rates
- Contact Us

The first ever specialized Pink Pages directory of education sector in Bangladesh

Tech Snaps

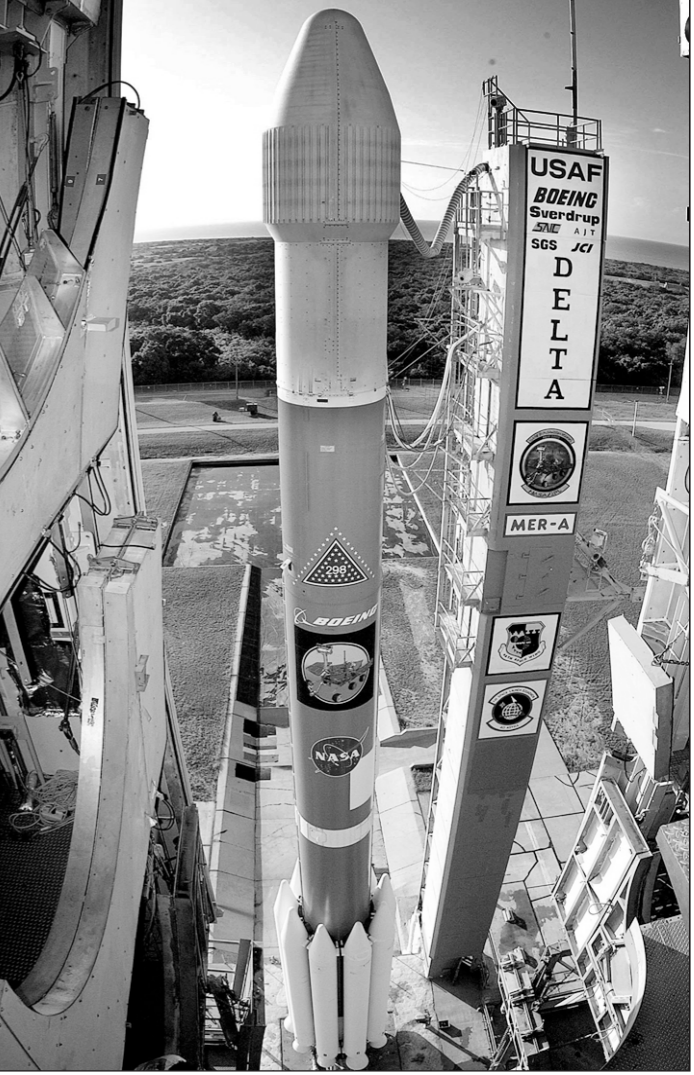
Running the next mile with you

HP will continue its investment in consumer needs by unveiling new products on June 12 at the Dhaka Sheraton Hotel, says a press release. The event theme, "Running the Next Mile with You" encapsulates the concept of a cohesive partnership between HP and its partners. A new product training will also provide HP's Premium Business Partners (PBPs) and authorised business partners, professional and technical expertise whilst the evening session is specially catered for consumers.

Making its debut are the D220, D330 and D530 from the Business Desktop range, N620c, nx9010 from the Notebook, PC h1910 and xv4100 from Pocket PC and Workstation range respectively.

Another event highlight includes a product fair where the new products will be showcased. This fair is jointly organized by HP and the PBPs.

Photo Tech



This photo shows a view from the service structure as it is moved back from the Delta 2 launch vehicle on Monday, on pad 17-A at Cape Canaveral, Florida in preparation for the launch of NASA's Mars Exploration Rover A later in the day. The second launch attempt was scrubbed shortly afterward as inclement weather moved into the area delaying the launch until June 10.

Dr. Tech

Dear Dr. Tech,
Sometimes when I uninstall a program it still appears on my Add/Remove programs list? The program is gone, but its entry is still there. How can I get rid of it?
Sultana Rahman

Dear Sultana Rahman
I received a problem like this once before. When that happens, most people click the program, hit the Add / Remove button and end up with an error. And the program is still stuck on the list. It may have been removed from your computer, but its ghost seems determined to stay on.

So, is the program listing there forever? Can you ever get rid of it? YES - but you have to play around in your system registry.

Before we go any farther, I want to say that messing with your registry is not for everyone and should only be attempted by advanced users. If any of the information below does not make sense to you, it is probably NOT a good idea for you to be trying this tip. So, do this only at your own risk. If

something gets messed up, I do not want to hear about it :-)
Here's the procedure:
1. Run your registry editor by hitting the **Start** button, **Run**, Then type:
regedit
Hit Enter.
2. Your registry editor should now be up and running. Now would be a good time to back up your registry by hitting the **File** menu, **Export Registry**. Just in case.
3. OK, now navigate to:
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Uninstall
4. Under this Uninstall folder, you'll see all the stuff that's listed on the Add / Remove programs list. Find the folder for the program that's stuck in your Add / Remove programs box, **right-click**, and select **Delete** from the resulting menu.
Now, go back to your Control Panel, Add / Remove programs area and you should find that extra program is now gone.
dailystartech@yahoo.com

Tech Saviour

Software comes in aid of lab animals

BBC ONLINE

INDIAN scientists have developed a computer programme for drug research designed to reduce the number of animals used in laboratory experiments.

The software, called Drug Discovery Assistant or DD Assist, is being used by India's Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI) in the northern city of Lucknow.

Director of the CDRI, C M Gupta, said that the program will reduce the use of laboratory animals by nearly 90%.

Now only two or three of the trials will be conducted on animals, compared to between 20 and 30 in the past.

Time-saving
Most of the tests will be done by a computer model which relies on four databases.

Selected molecules are passed through each database for their prioritisation as potential drug candidates.

The software application has databases on specific diseases like diabetes, dyslipidemia, cardio vascular system disorders and diseases affecting the central nervous system.

It also has data on drugs in use, failed or withdrawn drugs and candidate drugs.

Scientists say the new software will drastically reduce time and cost of coming up with a new drug.

At present the laboratory is spending 20 to 25 years in developing a new drug. During this time some of the drugs become obsolete.

Major step
Now the research time will be reduced at least by half.

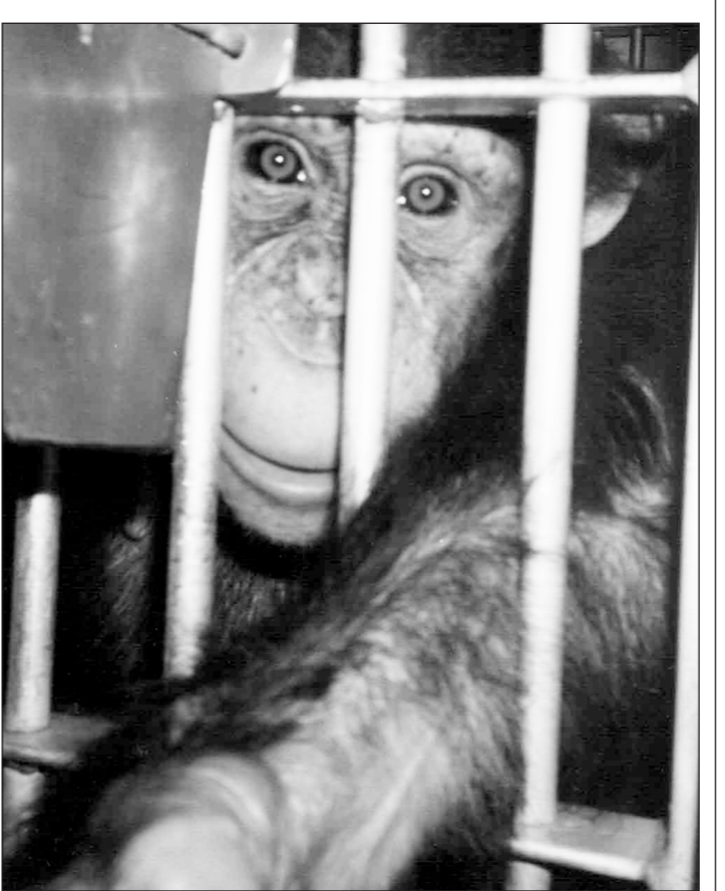
This will help the Indian drug industry compete with the developed world.

Scientists say similar technology is already being used by developed countries.

But costs were high and beyond reach of the Indian medical industry. The Indian software DD Assist is much cheaper.

Scientists have described it as a major step for the drug research industry, which felt handicapped in competition with research groups in developed countries.

The software was developed by Invenio Biosolutions in Delhi.



The programme will help reduce animal experiments in India

Tech Toon



"If you'd like to know how my day went, go to www.my-boss-is-a-jerk.com!"

Star Tech Quiz 43

Check the box beside the correct answer

1. 1 Terabyte = 1,024 ?

Gigabytes Kilobyte
 Megabytes None of these

2. On which day, Windows 2000 was launched?

Jan 10, 2000 Feb 17, 2000
 March 3, 2000 Dec. 25, 1999

Name: _____ Occupation: _____
Address: _____
Contact Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Last week's answers
1. PPTP 2. New Technology

Winner: Shimul Rahaman
73, Green Road, Dhaka 1205

Please fill this up and send your answers to Star Tech Quiz, The Daily Star, 19 Karwan Bazaar, Dhaka 1215 by June 16, 2003.

Palm Reader



Japanese electronics giant Fujitsu displays a prototype model of the new biometric security system with an infrared contactless sensor to read venous patterns on the users' palm during a security devices exhibition in Tokyo on June 04. Fujitsu is expecting to put it on the market later this year.

New Tech

New computer memory

International Business Machines Corp (IBM), and German chip maker Infineon Technologies AG on Tuesday said they made an important step toward developing a new kind of memory that could enable computers to boot up instantaneously.

IBM said that the magnetic random access memory technology, or MRAM, could replace existing forms of dynamic random access memory, or DRAM -- which is the most popular form of computer memory -- as early as 2005.

But it also acts like so-called "flash" memory and retains information when power is turned off, which means that it could replace flash, as well. With MRAM, a personal computer could turn on almost immediately, like a light switch, IBM said.

Unlike current versions of computer memory found in everything from PCs to handheld computers, MRAM uses magnetic charges rather than electrical charges to store memory.

The move comes as the industry is looking for better ways to make handheld computers and cell phones so that they can handle data more efficiently, one analyst said. Handheld computers and cell phones have been taking on new functions as the telecommunication systems that carry data have improved.

IBM, of Armonk, New York, has been working on developing MRAM since the 1970s and continued that research even after it exited the business of making memory chips. It said it hopes to have some demo products that use the chips out next year.

"It really demonstrates that there is technical feasibility. We can get the performance, we can get the cell size," said Randy Isaac, vice president of strategic alliances at IBM. IBM's memory cell is 1.4 microns, or about 20 million times smaller than the top of a pencil eraser.

IBM is presenting the development at the VLSI Symposia in Kyoto, Japan on Tuesday.

Reuters, New York

Best 10 Websites Category: Shoes

- ShoeBuy.com**
Shoebuy.com is the largest footwear super site dedicated to all categories of footwear for men, women, teens and children. Our goal is to offer the widest selection of shoes at great prices in the most convenient manner.
URL: <http://www.shoebuy.com>
- Shoes2Die4.com**
Contemporary shoes and accessories for men and women and a back up with "to die for" service.
URL: <http://www.shoes2die4.com>
- Zappos.com**
Zappos.com is the web's most popular shoe store. Over 100 of your favorite brands, everything from Doc Martens and Timberland to Steve Madden and Easy Spirit. Satisfaction guaranteed.
URL: <http://www.zappos.com>
- Support Plus**
The items you need at affordable prices, excellent service and support.
URL: <http://www.supportplus.com>
- Dexter Shoe Company**
Dexter knows its shoes have to go everywhere and do anything. The company's full line of men's and women's casual and dress shoes, as well as boating, hiking, walking, bowling and golf styles, all live up to this promise.
URL: <http://www.dextershoe.com>
- WearItAll.com**
WearItAll.com is a virtual mall where you can buy clothing direct from the trend setting designers who are creating fashion for the entertainment industry's hottest stars.
URL: <http://www.wearitall.com>
- ARIAT**
Ariat offers a full range of Western and English riding boots, work boots and casual footwear.
URL: <http://www.ariat.com>
- bluefly**
Save 25-75% on designer fashion
URL: <http://www.bluefly.com>
- Nordstromshoes.com**
Make room for shoes.
URL: <http://www.nordstromshoes.com>
- Nike**
Nike shoes & accessories
URL: <http://www.nike.com>