



*With various forces combining to transform the IT landscape, how do you see the role of the IT department evolving?*

There used to be a lot of rhetoric in the industry about how IT Departments would eventually go away due to a number of forces, including the proliferation of cloud technologies. But the industry has abandoned that notion, mostly because it's silly, it doesn't make sense. Instead, what we're actually seeing is that cloud technologies are making it possible for IT Departments to have a higher impact and add more value to the business.

Gartner refers to IT as an Internal Cloud Service Broker, and I think that's a very accurate description of how IT has evolved and will continue to evolve. What's starting to happen, with the combination of various forces and cloud being one of the bigger forces at play, is that a lot of the things that IT Departments used to do are being done with cloud technologies. These are largely tactical functions at the bottom of the stack where IT was dealing with physical devices such as servers, laptops, networks and storage. Most of that work is being moved to data centers. Today essentially everything from the OS level down is managed for IT with things like patches and automatic upgrades.

Then if you factor in BYOD (bring your own device), the IT landscape and the role of IT changes even more. Employees using their own devices at work were once viewed as problematic. Now that is helping so much of that can be managed seamlessly once security is applied IT move up the value chain even more. IT now gets out of "break-fix mode"; they no longer have to support devices that are foreign to the end user, which used to demand much of their time. For instance, if I'm a new employee and I'm familiar with my Windows phone the learning curve for getting me up and running on a BlackBerry will have an impact on IT. But if I'm able to use my own device, I don't need support from IT. This brings the amount of support work, and support costs, way down, freeing IT up to move away from the world of managing physical devices. Instead they are transcending to the notion of being the Internal Cloud Service Brokers in their enterprise that Gartner talks about.

With these shifts IT is purchasing, configuring, implementing, managing vendors, integrating, aggregating and customizing instead of reacting to “break-fix” scenarios all day. IT has been moving and continues to move up the value chain. IT is shifting into the role of making business processes run more successfully. It’s a very exciting time to be in IT.

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