



*What will the software industry look like in 3, 5, even 10 years from now?*

Cloud computing is the catalyst for a sea of change in the way business operates, transforming every aspect of the enterprise from the executive suite to the receiving dock.

Companies will no longer need vast IT departments to maintain on-premise servers and software. The IT department as we know it today, will cease to exist. This change will free up the CIO to have a much more strategic role within the company. In fact, many of today's forward thinking CIO's are rushing to embrace the cloud for just this reason. They never wanted to maintain server farms or manage IT infrastructure - their goal was always to utilize technology to add strategic value to the company.

From a functionality view, services and applications delivered via the cloud will become a great leveler, providing best-in-class solutions to companies of any size allowing them to better compete with the largest companies by essentially removing implementation and cost barriers that have excluded small and mid-sized companies from adopting expensive, yet strategic enterprise solutions. These technologies with frequent and transparent upgrades will enable small and mid-sized businesses to stay ahead of enterprise solutions allowing the best of these

companies to beat stodgy incumbents in a variety of industries. In addition, widespread adoption of these applications permits companies to shift resources and focus on more strategic projects, which in turn will fuel new innovation within industries and add to overall economic growth.

*What customer demands and business trends will drive changes in software products, how they're developed, and the industry that provides them?*

As businesses strive to become more agile in their management and better anticipate future economic events, they will continue to look outside their company to factor economic indicators into their overall business planning. Companies will demand solutions that provide a deeper look into the "goings on" of their business and be keen to incorporate external data, bringing a new level of data and analytics into the decision making process as this process becomes more science than intuition.

Armed with the best cloud-based applications, business leaders will more tightly align organizational units and become more agile in their management. As this happens, we'll see new developments in finance applications, particularly in the area of corporate performance management (CPM) solutions, which will incorporate world-class reporting and analytics.

To visualize the impact on businesses, visualize the car you drove in 2001. Now, fast-forward to a shiny, new technology loaded automobile. In 2001, we had limited data - a speedometer and perhaps a distance to empty indicator. Today cars come loaded with a navigation system that guides you to your destination packed with a host of data providing the best route, traffic conditions, fuel needs and where to find the nearest gas, food or ATM. The technology not only saves on resources and time but also has changed for the better the experience of driving to a new destination.

The SaaS-based CPM solution of the future will be available to all decision makers, not just senior executives and finance professionals. These decision makers will utilize the CPM solution to accurately predict the future effect of current decisions using both internal and external data along with smart leading indicators. Ultimately this technology will allow the finance function to become true leaders within the organization and key business partners to functional decision makers - becoming the "go to place" for more informed decision making.

Like today's technology-loaded vehicles, the CPM solutions of tomorrow will drive better executive decisions by providing a collaborative management solution that combines the latest market information, financial data and best practices to improve the corporate bottom line.

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