



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

This year, a majority of cloud spending is coming from the corporate IT budget rather than business unit people buying SaaS on the side, which you saw in years past. More and more, FinancialForce.com is being introduced to customers by the IT department. A number of years ago, the IT group saw the cloud as a threat, but now IT actually sees the cloud as strategic and something that they can evolve around as well. They are clearly starting to embrace it. I see that there is a distinct move towards corporate budgets buying these cloud solutions now, not departmental budgets trying to work their way around IT departments. This starts to take us close to a tipping point, where people are using cloud technologies, not as a sideline, but as a mainstream part of their business.

From an IT spending perspective, I suspect that we are going to see more spending on cloud technology and we're going to see IT budgets increasingly allocated to it, rather than cloud expensed ad hoc against departmental budgets.

Social media and social business are big themes for 2012. In which areas of business will the social movement have the most impact (or most potential for impact)? Why?

Social media, enterprise social media in particular, is coming along at the right time. Companies today are increasingly leveraging virtual business models utilizing more subcontractors, home workers and geographically dispersed employees. Social media apps like Chatter do a great job of connecting people and the business information held in your business applications,

regardless of where they sit in the world or where they sit on the organization chart.

That's almost an expectation in something like the professional services space. I think this is why you will see professional services organizations lead in the adoption of social media in businesses. They have the killer use case for social media. They operate virtually and work in teams. In that business, your teams need to be in synch and collaborate in real time across sales, services and finance. The project work is social by nature, so the lines need to blur across teams and encompass the customer. We are very focused on this area and are delivering innovative applications to help our customers collaborate not just internally, but also collaborate more closely with their customers. For instance, FinancialForce.com's professional services customers are using Chatter to follow project activity on a project wall, so that disparate teams can monitor a project's progress and gain visibility to project management conversations.

When you think about it, most companies are working "socially" already, but they are doing it the hard way – conference calls, voice mail, IM and email. Worse, those conversations are all disconnected from core business systems, with no audit trail and no connection to customer or project data. It is difficult to run a virtual company this way. Companies are using really expensive, hardworking people to bridge the technological data gaps with phone calls.

So, I think we will see collaboration and social apps become even more mainstream inside companies in the coming years. I think business people had a hard time grasping why they would need Facebook or Twitter-like functions inside their companies. I fault the industry for selling it that way. Tools like Chatter are encouraging collaboration inside companies in ways we haven't seen before and it is paying off in a big way. FinancialForce.com customers are breaking down the barriers between sales and accounting, for instance, to help collect cash and reduce bad debt as a team, and essentially providing a better service to their customers.

Does Mobile fall into one of your top 5 priorities for 2012? If so, how will you be attacking it? If not, why not?

Without question, mobile is now part of enterprise IT planning. Mobile devices will soon become a primary way people consume cloud applications. We're going to see a lot more action around tablets with mobile applications and analysts predict that there will be more than 20 times the current amount of mobile cloud based applications by 2014. Technology is changing the way we socialize and the way we socialize is influencing the way we build and use technology. We have several apps on the drawing board for 2012, including some designed exclusively for senior managers and some for field employees, such as doing project time entry from your mobile phone.

As such, I see the conversations on cloud as a topic going down, and the conversations on mobile and social applications coming up, although the cloud is the enabler. There is much more to these applications than just being in the cloud in an IT sense - there is genuine business value in them and there are genuine ways for people to innovate.

Our customers may be visiting a client, for example, and want to know the current payment status before they walk into the meeting; or they may be on the road, but need access to the latest KPI's and financial reports. FinancialForce Mobile leverages the Force.com mobile application platform, enabling customers to use a variety of mobile devices including Blackberries, iPhones and iPads to access financial and project data. Essentially,

FinancialForce.com mobile applications enable customers to access accounting and project services information anytime, anywhere, boosting productivity and saving valuable time.

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