In the summer of 2007, the Society for Information Management (SIM) once again commissioned a formal survey to uncover the opinions of its members on four important topics: key management concerns, application and technology developments, organizational considerations (CIO reporting, headcount, retention, skills required by IT staff, and budgets), and enablers and inhibitors of IT-business alignment. We received responses from IT executives representing 112 SIM organizations. These responses, analyzed based on industry, revenue, and over time, many of the responses this year indicate some interesting changes from previous years. This article discusses these changes and their managerial implications.

The top five management concerns were:
1. Attracting, developing, retaining IT professionals
2. IT and business alignment
3. Build business skills in IT
4. Reduce the cost of doing business
5. Improve IT quality

The top five application and technology developments were: (1) Antivirus protection, (2) Business intelligence, (3) Networks, (4) Business process management, (5) Continuity planning and disaster recovery. More than half of these technologies were new to top developments.

As an organization, IT is seeing its budgets on the rise, with headcount accounting for 30% of its spending. 77% of IT organizations are centralized, with 31% of the CIOs reporting to CEOs, and 60% of the CIOs having at least four years in their current position. The top five enablers of alignment were: (1) Senior executive support for IT, (2) IT understands the firm’s business environment, (3) Close partnership between IT and business, (4) IT and business have close relationship, and (5) IT plans linked to business plans.

Conversely, the top five inhibitors of alignment were: (1) Lack of senior executive IT support, (2) Business units lack of understanding of the firm’s IT environment, (3) Business lack of support for corporate-wide IT initiatives, (4) Clarity and predictability of IT goals/directions, and (5) Business units competing for IT resources rather than sharing them.

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