

RTG Newsletter

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FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE

I have been in the information systems business since 1971 and in management consulting since 1985. Many trends, acronyms and company names have come and gone. One acronym has stuck: IT. Well, I don't like it so much. I'll tell you why below.

Bob Amster - Principal, RTG

"What's in a name? That which we call a rose, by any other name, would smell as sweet" - William Shakespeare, 1594

By Bob Amster

When the Bard wrote these words of wisdom he was not referring to the name of a product, or a company, or a discipline, like Information Technology. (He was inferring that what matters, is what someone is, not what one is called, specifically Romeo Montague.) However, the names of certain things (Tweeter), or companies (Intactix), should mean something; like the names of The National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC), The International Business Machines Corporation (IBM), or The National Cash Register Corporation (NCR). Names of businesses should help to define what the companies are. Any name ending with an 'X' (Retalix, Intactix, Givex, SmartClix, Tomax, Torex, Trax) or 'K' (like the old Retek) should be banned, as should many other names that don't end in either of these letters but don't mean anything, either.

The business function that we today have come to call IT (Information Technology) is not only about technology. It is about information *systems* whether manual or automated. It is about using technology *often* to support these systems and processes. I believe that the function should go back to being called IS (like when it was MIS), or IS&T (Information Systems and Technology). Calling it information *technology* infers that it's all about technology when, in fact, we continue to harp on the point that CIOs have to have *business* acumen and should not follow the *geek* track.

I think that in non-technology companies *CTOs* should report to *CIOs*. I see too many companies in which a CIO or VP of IT is too much the 'techie' and over engages in technical initiatives, and is not enough the 'biz' guy engaged in solving business problems *through* the use of technology. If we emphasize the word *technology*, businesses run the risk of falling in love with

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technology (because technology *can* be sexy), and embarking on projects for technology's sake instead of business' sake.

You may disagree, but from now on, you will hear me talk about the information systems and technology function.

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www.RetailTechnologyGroup.com.

WHAT'S NEW WITH US

SAP

Alan Snyder has contracted with SAP to provide consulting services, and working with three functional areas: Analytics, Marketing and Sales.

The assignment is based in SAP's North American Headquarters in Newtown

Square, PA. The primary focus of the engagement is to help Operationalize Analytics by improving the integration of Analytical

insights to inform and optimize Marketing and Sales business decisions

across the end-to-end marketing cycle.

The engagement has a "Special Projects" orientation, and includes a

range of process, system, reporting and organizational assessments

intended to enhance a seamless cross-functional alignment and integration. It is a full-time and open-ended engagement at this time.

Kal-Tire

Robert Lawson continues to manage the development and implementation of new POS software and new POS hardware over a 200-store chain for this large Canadian tire retailer.

Acquisition Work

Duane Wolter is engaged at a multi-billion-dollar, vertically integrated manufacturer and wholesaler which operates a \$150 Million specialty soft goods retail division. The company decided to expand its retail base as a part of its growth

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strategy. We were called in because of our experience with 15 prior retail acquisitions and our technical accounting knowledge, to provide additional retail acquisition support to complete the negotiation, integration and financial reporting.

Duane assisted in negotiating the acquisition and saving over \$1 Million in purchase price by challenging calculations and definitions. Redirected the transition process from 90 days and use of sellers systems and staff to a one week store conversion and only use the buyer's systems and staff. Resulted in saving over \$1 Million in transition costs while improving internal controls and reporting. Completed all financial accounting and reporting as required by authoritative accounting pronouncements, including FAS141, Accounting for Acquisitions.

[Playboy Enterprises, Inc.](#)

Bob Berger continues an engagement with Playboy Enterprises, Inc. focused on restructuring the operations of the retail store at Caesar's Forum in preparation for expansion. The store was recently purchased from a franchisee. Bob is directing operations at the store and warehouse and is assisting with the buying and promotional activities for the retail effort.

He also led the negotiation for and installation of KWI's retail inventory management and POS system, reorganization of the warehouse for increased efficiencies and provided guidance for senior members of Playboy management regarding product lines, cost controls and personnel issues.

The Retail Technology Group:
www.retailtechnologygroup.com
is located at:
761 Rock Rimmon Road
Stamford, CT 06903-1216
Telephone 203 329-2621
bamster@retailtechgroup.com