

Tech Talk: Some interesting tech trends to watch in the coming year

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As we move into the second decade of this millennium, there is no shortage of technology developments to keep an eye on for your business.

Perhaps the single most important issue facing businesses in the new year is the proper security of information you work with on a daily basis. In response to high-profile data privacy breaches, many states and even the federal government are enacting laws requiring businesses to get much more deliberate about how they work with and store private customer data. Massachusetts is implementing perhaps the strictest such law in the nation in March. Even businesses outside of that state will be required to comply with this law. If you don't have a defined information security policy in your business, you need one now. Talk with your IT partner to be sure you understand what will be required to be in compliance.

Mobile technologies continue to become more prevalent in the workplace and more and more people need to work wherever they happen to be at any given time. Secure remote computing has been an option for even the smallest of businesses for many years, but these capabilities continue to mature and develop to the point where the work experience remotely is nearly identical to that in the office.

Smartphones continue to be one of the fastest growing segments of mobile computing in businesses. It's almost becoming a rarity to see a business person with a traditional mobile phone as opposed to a smartphone that allows for secure, wireless access to company data. Synchronization of e-mail, calendar, contacts and to-do lists is almost a given today. More and more companies are also leveraging smartphones to deploy access to business applications without the need for more robust computer like a notebook or tablet. The advent of the iPhone and now the Droid mobile operating systems is providing more ubiquitous options for businesses to pursue.

In the area of traditional mobile computing, notebook and tablet PCs are powerful enough to replace most desktop computers for any workers who require the freedom they provide. As with every portable computing device, the key is to be able to properly secure data contained on them, in the event of loss or theft.

Within the office, the convergence of voice and data services continues to accelerate. Voice Over IP has moved squarely into the mainstream and many businesses are moving away from traditional phone services to the affordability and flexibility of VoIP services. This also moves organizations toward the elusive goal of what's referred to as unified communications, where all your communications tools are accessed in one place.

The good news as we move into 2010, is that technology has an excellent track record for improvements that make our lives easier along with decreasing costs over time.

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