



# IT Managers Connection

- HOME
- EMAIL
- ABOUT
- RSS 2.0
- ATOM 1.0

### Recent Posts

- Interview] Part6: Dr. Naka dilma
- Interview] Part4: Dr. Naka dilma
- Guest Blogger] Part2: Experience Always Counts
- Interview] Part3: Dr. Naka dilma
- Guest Blogger] Part 1: The Importance of Relationship

### Tags

- Adam Cole
- Barnaby Jeans
- Career Tips
- CC Blogged Down
- CIPS
- David Cantlon
- DJ Dunkey
- Downloads
- Events
- Graham Jones
- Guest Bloggers
- Industry Perspectives
- Interviews
- IT Manager Interviews
- IT Manager Podcast
- Series
- Jacqueline Hutchinson
- Jing Chen
- Lise
- Services
- Mich Tulloch
- MS News
- Newsfire
- Partners
- Podcasts
- Ruth Morion
- Seal O'Driscoll
- Stephen Ibaraki
- Training
- Val Matson

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Stephen Ibaraki Industry Analyst  
FCIPS, I.S.P., CFMFA, CMP, MVP



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## A Chat with Arthur Entlich, MS MVP in Printing and Imaging

MVPs represent a tremendous resource to IT Managers since their recognized and elite expertise extends to more than 90 technologies/services and they are part of your technology community—as independent professionals who have been acknowledged for their many continuing important contributions to the industry.

In my travels, I get a chance to meet outstanding individuals. Arthur is one of them and also a Microsoft MVP. Arthur and I got to chat about important issues that I wanted to share with you.

Thank you and Enjoy!

Stephen Ibaraki, [FCIPS, I.S.P.](#) ... [sibarak@ciips.ca](mailto:sibarak@ciips.ca)

Index and links to Questions

Q1 [Can you tell us more about your award area as a Most Valuable Professional \(MVP\) and how you came to work in this area?](#)  
*"As digital imaging becomes part of broader areas of personal and commercial use, I'm helping people further afield. For instance, just the other day, a dentist asked about going digital with his X-ray lab."*

Q2 [What would make your list of the top technical challenges and how they can be resolved?](#)  
*"In the specific areas of printing and imaging .....color management.....image permanence.....lowering the initial cost of equipment acquisition while asking highly inflated prices for consumables to make them the profit driver.....scanners, printers and other similar peripherals are being forced into premature obsolescence by lack of upgraded drivers....."*

Q3 [Please make your top predications for 2007 and beyond in your areas of technical expertise.](#)  
*"Much within imaging technologies will continue in an evolutionary, rather than revolutionary fashion....."*

Q4 [What should businesses know about future trends in the Internet environment? What are the implications and business opportunities? Why should businesses care?](#)  
*".....the internet becoming a new place to "hang out".....telecommuting.....virtual products are becoming acceptable.....never before in the history of business has the ability to create a niche market out of thin air been so available....."*

Q5 [If you sum up your life experiences with some career tips for the ICT professional, what would be your tips and the reasons behind them?](#)  
*"I suppose what I am saying is that besides developing methods of emulating what already is and translating it using current technologies, we need people who will unleash new capabilities and societal expressions and who will take their creative vision forward."*

Q6 [You have a passion for consumer advocacy. Can you tell us more about this?](#)  
*"If the energy, time, materials, and a certain environmental cost are required to produce something, that item should be of value equal to or beyond the fundamentals that produced it. It offends me when manufacturers release products that are not properly implemented, incomplete, over-hyped, or of poor quality.....I note a tendency of products to last just beyond their warranty period, and as warranties become shorter, this is particularly concerning."*

Q7 [What are your views on the environment and e-waste?](#)  
*"How many of us have stored away in our closets and basements perfectly usable peripherals that have been forced into obsolescence by lack of drivers, or change in a plug or interface? Each time a new operating system goes through an introduction, it negates hundreds of thousands of otherwise usable peripherals. For lack of a small bit of code, millions of otherwise perfectly functional devices will be forced into the e-waste stream."*

Q8 [You have a remarkable history. Please share this with our audience.](#)  
*"What it ended up being was a forced entry into the early realms of computer graphic arts, which ultimately give me an early leg up on using computer technology in art and photography."*

Q9 [What are your "burning" questions that you want answered?](#)  
*".....How do we maintain or re-establish balance between our humanity and technology?....Can the natural world survive technology?....Are we willing to speak up in the boardroom of our technological leaders about these issues?....."*



Ruth Morbin IT Pro Advisor  
Microsoft Canada



John Osley Director Community Evangelism  
Microsoft Canada



Archives

- February 2007 (12)
- January 2007 (18)
- December 2006 (4)
- November 2006 (18)
- October 2006 (16)
- September 2006 (23)
- August 2006 (28)
- July 2006 (26)
- June 2006 (38)
- May 2006 (28)
- April 2006 (30)
- March 2006 (38)
- February 2006 (41)
- January 2006 (28)
- December 2005 (28)
- November 2005 (8)
- October 2005 (8)
- September 2005 (2)
- August 2005 (7)

Comments

Rick said:

I didn't realize that an MVP could have so much depth and breadth of experience. How do you get into a project?

I have to agree with Arthur's views on taking an active role on wacsb and his work for the consumer (and users). We are managers and we need to take a broader view too!

January 26, 2007 10:23 AM

WT said:

I totally concur with his views on wacsb. What options are available for businesses and consumers to change this trend?

January 26, 2007 4:50 PM

Stephen Ibaraki, FCIPS, ISP, sibaraki@clis.ca said:

Rick,

There is <http://mvp.support.microsoft.com> to find out more information. MVPs are listed and some have contact information too. I know that Arthur has been monitoring this blog so you will likely hear more of his views about wacsb.

Cheers,

Stephen Ibaraki

January 26, 2007 7:40 PM

Stephen Ibaraki, FCIPS, ISP, sibaraki@clis.ca said:

WT, that's a good question. I talked with Arthur and you should be seeing a response from him.

Cheers,

Stephen

January 26, 2007 7:42 PM

Arthur Entlich said:

WT asked:

What options are available for businesses and consumers to change this trend?

Response from Arthur Entlich:

Although the question asked is fundamental, the answer isn't simple. Both manufacturers and end users have incorporated swacsb and disposable technologies into our culture. Ultimately, end users have more impact than they may realize. After all, a warehouse full of goods is unprofitable until it reaches the final user. But end user influence comes with responsibility. We often hear the expression "vote with your wallet", but what does that mean? We need to reward good corporate behaviour, but how do we know what that is? Part of that process is seeking out and purchasing goods which use durable materials, are reliable, allow for reasonably priced upgrade and repair, and recyclability when the product needs to be discarded as it eventually becomes legitimately obsolete. That also means finding manufacturers which do not ripian products by abandoning software driver upgrades. That often means looking beyond initial cost acquisition and it may require extra research to do so. This is where, once again, we can use the technologies afforded us, such as the Internet to seek an exchange of information and experience. Upgrading to a new OS should be contemplated carefully before jumping in with both feet. One needs to weigh the potential value the new OS might provide versus the cost in lost use of hardware and software that may no longer be compatible with it.

We may also need to alter our attitude about paying for after-purchase software. A few companies have tried to charge nominal amounts for upgraded drivers to help recover their costs only to be punished with negative reviews for doing so.

The public needs to inform their political representatives that they want legislation to control swacsb. This may be in the form of laws which regulate reasonable "lifespans" for specific goods or taxation programs on disposable goods. Both purchasers and manufacturers often balk at the idea of legislative controls, but the type of laws can level the playing field for manufacturers so that those which exhibit greater social responsibility aren't placed at a competitive disadvantage while the public becomes better educated to the advantages of making such purchases.

Lately, manufacturers themselves need to begin to take a more proactive approach toward correcting the issue. They need to make strides toward educating the public to the advantages of quality over price, and the value in reducing obsolescence, however, that will only occur if the public responds with a willingness to alter their buying habits as a result.

For those who advise on business purchasing decisions, I suggest you begin to ask your suppliers questions about durability, manufacturers' support for future upgrades and attempt to convince your purchasing departments of the value in lower obsolescence purchases. Then recommend those products and manufacturers.

The battle against swacsb needs to be initiated from many directions. No one sector or channel can individually solve it but a big picture view can certainly begin to motivate the necessary cultural change required to curb it. Today, few people would voluntarily ride in a car without seat belts or airbags, yet just a few decades ago only a small group of road users pressed forward while neither car manufacturers nor the general public seemed willing to acknowledge their value. No cultural change occurs because a small group of dedicated individuals bring them forward for the benefit of the majority. Even good ideas take time to be adopted.

January 31, 2007 8:12 AM

Graham Jones said:

Arthur, I have read your input with interest and there are many examples of how things change if we look at history. About 10 years ago I was an IT Manager with an engineering company and laser printers were viewed as commercial products and not even dreamt of for SOHO. Even a black laser printer cost about \$1k and colour was out of most people's reach.

Fast forward to today where we have pretty much gone through the era of "virtually" free general purpose inkjet printers where the money is made on the materials and into very cheap black laser printers which are perfectly good for most SOHO situation. We are moving into the same "model" with laser as we had with inkjet.

Unless you use all of the ink cartridge in an inkjet printer on a regular basis they tend to dry up resulting in endless time-wasting, frustration and waste of ink. Hence the increasing popularity of cheap black laser printers since most general purpose printing is black. Photographic printing is another story. I suspect few people stop to find out what a bulky cartridge using inkjet compared with a trip to the nearest discount store or use an on-line service!

Now come affordable colour laser! Over the past year prices of the printers have dropped tremendously, again with a view no doubt to making money off the materials. When I could count prices offered over the Xmas/New Year period I sat down and did a quick analysis of "value" vs my existing inkjet (to cost me also include a "meating around" time and ink waste) and decided that it was time to ditch my inkjet (BTW it will be donated to charity and go to a good home - not just become immediate waste). I decided at \$200 for an HP 2800 (I also did my due diligence on user reviews) it was time to move on! Due to low availability in the end I had to settle for the 2800M (networkable and I am using that way) version for an extra \$60. Even then it was way cheaper than what I paid for my inkjet 4 years ago.

I am absolutely love it! When you click "print" you get on demand good results - no messing, no waste of materials. I do realize that in certain respects that, along with many others, are contributing to the waste problem which I do take seriously. On the other hand if HP operated on a different profit model, i.e. higher initial cost then people probably wouldn't buy and the longer term cost benefits of scale of manufacture wouldn't be there. Unfortunately, that's how commerce works.

This sort of scenario is repeated many times over in today's world. Do I think that it's good? No, not at all. I am simply caught up in it just like the rest of us. Unfortunately, obsolescence has become part of our way of life and to change it will require a fundamental change in the structure of commerce. For example, I have a hard time seeing a company like HP putting itself out of the printer business by outprinting itself! There has to be a level playing field but who determines what that is? Typically it's only government that can intervene but that's always, is politically charged. Then you have the international scene to consider. Who determines the "world's" level playing field and how?

As the world's supposedly "highest" people we still have a record of rushing toward the cliff like a bunch of fleas, try to "break hard" and "make a left" before it's all too late. The global warming debate is a great example of that. We seem to need disaster squarely charging us in the face before we really "act". Disaster recovery seems to be our skill set rather than disaster avoidance! I suspect that only when it too costs a lot more to dispose of waste (environmental damage not withstanding) at the consumer level that anything will really change. Most people are happy to look out of their bedroom window in a morning and, if it looks the same as yesterday, merely go about their business blissfully ignorant of what really happened to the world over the previous 24 hours.

Does this mean that we should simply throw our hands in the air? Absolutely not! As always it's those very few people who are willing to devote the "patience" and energy to a problem who begin to make a difference in the end even if it takes a long time. Attitude to life does not change quickly and often takes several generations. I applaud you and those like you for at least making the waste problem your problem.

Cheers,

Graham Jones, MVP

Windows Server - Customer Experience

February 1, 2007 1:22 PM

Stephen Ibaraki, FCIPS, ISP, sibaraki@clar.ca said:

Thank you for commenting Arthur. I'm on the board for Computers for Success (Computers for Schools) and they have a waste program which also involves repurposing of older systems for schools and employing/educating youth. CIPS is a co-funding principle of ITVolunteer.org where Graham Jones is the co-founder and active executive director. Graham was able to take donated older laptops from a school and have them repurposed for use by the Neil Squire Foundation which works to empower people with disabilities. Each bit helps to address the situation and especially if you have the ability to support worthy public causes. I wonder if Graham can share more stories about his connection since I know his waste program with Neil Squire is a continuing program.

Cheers,

Stephen Ibaraki

February 2, 2007 10:12 PM

Arthur Ehrlich said:

I want to thank Graham Jones for the thoughtful comments he has added to this discussion, and for his and Stephen Ibaraki's purposeful work in placing older technology into new settings and uses. It is sadly the type of programs that stretch the lifespan of technology that might otherwise end up unceremoniously dropped into landfills and becoming waste before its time.

Many of Graham's observations are bang on, and he recognizes many of the pitfalls that we face in making social changes that will lead to better practices.

I'd like to make mention of a couple of things relating to his comments. He speaks of how people tend to ignore things that don't seem to be impacting on their day to day perception of the world around them. Canadian environmental activist David Suzuki offers two interesting observations. The first is that at least until recently, the level of change most of us were aware of within our relatively short lives didn't afford us adequate observation time to recognize how severe the changes taking place truly have been, and he suggests we attempt to speak with our parents and grandparents about their early years to allow for a wider perspective of just how much not only technology, but the environment around us has been changed by mankind. The other example he brings up is a lake on which there is some duckweed (this is a small plant that floats over the water surface that we often see in relatively still water bodies). This duckweed multiplies such that it doubles the area of water it covers each year. Most people notice a slow increase in the amount over years, but only fully enter their awareness when they notice that one summer the duckweed is covering half the lake, and the next summer the whole lake is covered. Many aspects of environmental change follow the geometric progression, and seem to come from nowhere suddenly.

Indeed this is what has occurred with climate change. We tended to ignore the devastating storms and destruction until that North America, suddenly that became the tipping point for awareness.

On another subject I'd like to comment on Graham's discussion of the recent printer purchase. He mentions "Due to low availability, in the end I had to settle for the 2800M (networkable and I am using that way) version for an extra \$60." As it turns out Graham made a wise choice almost in spite of himself. The 2800M for \$60 extra afforded him more than networking. This printer actually is supplied with full toner cartridge, while the 2800 is provided with "starter" cartridge with half the toner in them. Further, the networkable version he purchased has a considerably higher duty cycle. So, for that extra \$60, he received a printer which will provide twice as many prints from the full toner cartridge, networking capability, and a more rugged printer designed for many more copies per month. He saved considerably more than he paid. The toner cartridge sell for about \$100 each, or \$400 for a set therefore the full cartridge provided about \$200 in additional toner over the less costly model. He also fell into the environmentally better option accidentally.

However, this is not to fault him. During one of my regular visits to a major big box (to keep up to date on printer hardware) I discovered the above matter was completely unknown to the salesperson until I made him aware of it and in that had to prove it by showing him the notice on the toner cartridge which revealed that one yielded only one-half the yield of the other. It had been a lost selling point that could have been shown to provide a better choice for buyers.

Although I am not promoting the business model used with most color laser printers today, moving toward better choices is a step in the right direction.

February 4, 2007 11:56 AM

Rory said:

I like the interview. Will there be more? How do you see Web 2.0/3.0 evolving?

February 4, 2007 4:12 PM

HK said:

Are there other MVPs in hardware?

February 4, 2007 7:32 PM

Graham Jones said:

Arthur, indeed I was blissfully unaware of the gains that I was making by putting down an extra \$60! So your comments about customer and salesperson ignorance and to some extent manufacturer "sneakiness" are bang on. I usually consider that I do my "due diligence" well but missed that one.

As a follow up to Stephen's comment about computers for the NSS, I did manage to help acquire some used laptops for them for their distance learning program via one of the local private schools. I also arranged an ongoing relationship between the two such that as older equipment became available it would automatically be offered to the NSS.

Much of the time I am sure that it is not that people really want to simply "junk" equipment it is more often that they either don't know how to pass it on to give it a second or even third useful life or the time and effort to do that simply never rises to the top of their "to do" list.

In this particular case I was able to make the connection for the 2 parties thanks to a VANTUG member who is the IT Manager at the school. So the real challenge is a mechanism to make those connections with "the line of distance" for all.

Many charities already have an arrangement with larger organizations to get desktop PC's "handed down". The so days 3 years seems to be about the replacement cycle. However, the challenge for charities today is an increasing need for greater efficiency and keeping pace with changing technology which demands better equipment. So we have a situation where the "hand me downs" are having a shorter and shorter life span. I know one case recently where even a fairly small charity who used to buy some new equipment with their hard earned funds instead because using the older equipment was becoming more and more of an overall hassle, updates, maintenance, etc.

That does not mean that the older equipment is "useless" per se. For example, the NSS has an excellent refurbishment program to get computers to as many disabled people as possible and have now done that with over 800 PC's. I have donated a couple of my own older PC's. Unfortunately, in real terms that's just a drop in the bucket. PC's at home are going the same way as TV's did a few years ago. Many people have one each and are now getting into networking. This has reached the point where BG recently announced new "bolproof" home networking software (no doubt based on SBB).

I teach a class where we build a desktop PC from scratch partly by way of education about "what's in the box" and also how to upgrade, maintain, etc. In that class I try to encourage people to consider upgrading where possible rather than sometimes thinking of replacement. The average person is pretty much ignorant about how to make such an assessment and is often at the mercy of the sales person in the big box store, a specially commissioned sales. Most people pay a very high price for their actual needs. Unfortunately they are caught up in the supposed "marathon progress" like the rest of us. Hardware advances, software takes advantage of the hardware, people are made to want the advantages (they may not always need them) and so it continues.

It is, of course, unrealistic to think that we can suddenly slow the pace of change. "Wealth" in the wide context is totally dependent upon change and I don't see a big rush back to the "have's" any time soon! On the other hand "global warming" might just decide that one for us!

I mentioned that the larger organizations often have programs to donate PC's. However, there are many more small to medium sized business who use total PC complement probably far exceeds the large business etc. Most of them probably don't have a program. If you fit in that category I would like to encourage you to consider it. What do you with your PC's now? Many people immediately think about schools and that is a worthy cause. However, there is an increasing disconnect between what kids see at home and at school. For the schools to be much closer to the current technologies. After all that's what kids see at school today and will see when they go out into the job world. On the other hand many of the "poorer" charities are still using 7-8 yr old equipment with Win98 and struggling every day to keep going.

So even if you only contribute to one local charity and see if you can improve their hardware situation then you have made a contribution. If we all do it then we might make some real impact.

Cheers

Graham J.

February 5, 2007 1:20 PM

Arthur Entlich said:

I didn't want to leave either Rory or HK without a reply. As to more MVP interviews, although this is a decision for Steven to make, I do believe I heard that more are being sought. Web 2.0/3.0 is outside of my area of explicit knowledge, so perhaps another MVP (or other) interview will be able to address that matter.

In any case, there are indeed other MVPs in hardware, such as those within my group (printing, fax, scanning) and other hardware areas, most dealing with Microsoft technologies, such as X-Box 360, tablet PCs, and multi-media.

February 9, 2007 5:04 AM

Stephen Barak, FCIPS, ISP, MVP, DFMPA, C.M.P., siberak@clox.ca said:

Rory/HK,

I am planning added interviews with MVPs since they represent such a diverse and interesting group with considerable expertise to share with IT managers.

Web 2.0/3.0 is something I work in as an industry analyst. You will see a broader and bigger pickup including in 2007. It's not coincidental that Time's Person of the Year was about online communities which is the hub of Web 2.0. Expect to see more embedded tools for social networking in IT solutions such as SharePoint.

As Arthur indicated, there are other Hardware MVPs and we can try hooking up with more in this blog.

Cheers,

Stephen Ibaraki

February 11, 2007 7:44 PM

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re: A Chat with Arthur Entlich, MS MVP in Printing and Imaging

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