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Speaks on the "Changing Role of the CIO"

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Martin Slofstra: Editorial Director - IT Business Group

This forum is also about engaging the widest spectrum of discussion on IT. This time we talk with powerhouse Editorial Director, Martin Slofstra, of the IT Business Group.

I enjoyed our chat since Martin brings a unique perspective on the industry and what matters to IT pros. Martin will share his insights every month in the IT Managers Connection. I invite you to post your comments here or send me an e-mail at sbaraki@cips.ca.

Enjoy!
 Stephen Ibaraki, FCIPS, I.S.P., MVP

Martin Slofstra is editorial director of the IT Business Group at Transcontinental Media, Canada's largest publisher of information technology-related newspapers and magazines. Titles include Computing Canada, Computer Dealer News, Communications and Networking, Direction Informatique, EDGE magazine, Technology in Government, and ITBusiness.ca, a daily news web site.

He has 20 years experience covering the IT industry in Canada, graduating with an M.A. in Journalism from the University of Western Ontario in London in 1982, and starting with Northern Telecom as a corporate writer in that same year. He joined Computing Canada as staff writer in 1985. He's also served as Communications Editor and Editor of that magazine. In 1997, he helped launched and became editor of InfoSystems Executive (now called EDGE), Canada's first technology magazine for business executives.

Mr. Slofstra regularly moderates panels and makes presentations at trade shows and conferences and other industry events.

To listen to the interview, click on this [MP3 file link](#)

DISCUSSION:

Interview Time Index (MM:SS) and Topic	
00:27:	Martin Slofstra talks about his role as editorial director overseeing six print publications and website (itbusiness.ca), including changes being made to reflect the trends in the market and what the readership want. <i>"In the new year our readers have told us they want to see more stories on innovation and trends in new technology. Over the past few years we have really concentrated on business case side of things and return on investment. What we are seeing, a lot of IT management and CIO's have come to terms with those issues and now we are seeing a fairly significant shift back to what can we do with newer technologies."</i>
02:30:	With easier access to technology than in the past, a lot more end users are involved. There is a shift in criteria for IT departments when they make purchasing decisions about new technology and this is something which will to be reflected in the publications' coverage. <i>"When IT Departments look at new technology, they really have to factor in things like ease of use and what the business user wants. For example if you have a laptop, it must be light and easy to carry and it must be durable. It must be something that really fits a need. Whereas before, the product was sold on how much storage it had or power of the processor."</i>
03:21:	Martin talks about a recent readership survey in which they got some clear indications of the kinds of things people want and the format in which they want to read it. <i>"Computing Canada ...has been around for 30 years and we had previously done a research study in 2001, but that said 5 years later, there were a few things that did change that jumped out at us.For example, we asked our readers if they would like to get a Computing Canada on-line only. One of things that really jumped out was that they really liked getting a print format. Ideally they would like to get a print publication every week."</i>
04:49:	Martin talks about their on-line publication, ITbusiness.ca <i>"There really is a requirement for us to deliver news on a daily basis.... It's changed how we do things around here....with the Internet you have to get your news out as soon as possible."</i>
05:26:	Comments about the blog column in the on-line publication itbusiness.ca: IT Business Blogs <i>"I think people don't just want the information, they want the context around it and the blog gives you a nice forum where you can do that on a daily basis. The nice thing about a blog, it is extremely easy for a reader to reply or to post a comment.....It's a great way to connect with readers."</i>
06:24:	Martin speaks to the highly qualified audience of his publication...the IT professional. <i>"We don't send out our publications to anonymous readers. We are a controlled circulation which means that we have to prove to our advertisers and our business partners that the people who read Computing</i>



Ruth Morbin IT Pro Advisor
Microsoft Canada



John Osley Director Community Evangelism
Microsoft Canada



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Canada are legitimately part of the industry or that they are an IT professional... which is quite different from consumer publications which use newsstands and other types of distribution."

07:03: Publications must make adjustments to reflect what the readers want which has included the move away from case studies.
"The problem with doing a case study is that it doesn't always apply to everybody in your audience."

08:33: Martin comments that more companies now (compared to last survey in 2001) are competing in the global marketplace and the need for increased international content.
"We asked them (readers in their survey) how much they liked to read of international stories and 90% of our subscribers said they wanted more content about global or international companies."

09:22: Martin discusses the greater focus on roadmaps for new technology.
"Some of these enterprise systems are so huge and complicated. They are installing a multi-million software system where you are outsourcing with a vendor.....You still need to do some long term planning but you need to know what direction they (big companies) are heading. We try to provide that information."

10:06: Martin give some predictions and trends to follow in 2007.
"It's almost too early to tell which technologies are going to jump out at us. Certainly security is rising in importance and I would have thought it would have levelled off. Wireless continues to be a huge area.....document management....."

11:40: Martin talks about his experiences doing panel discussions with CIO's: "where business and technology comes together".
"I think CIO's make extremely excellent panellists. They have a good handle on what's happening with technology, they've also become very business savvy. More and more CIO's are getting involved at the executive level.....They are considered a key executive player. That wasn't true not that long ago."

Posted: Sunday, December 10, 2006 5:33 PM by [ednitmgr](#)
Filed under: [Stephen Ibaraki](#), [Interviews](#), [Guest Bloggers](#)

Comments

Dick said:

I do more online than off so the trend make sense. Getting Martin's viewpoint is useful and I want to hear more.

December 20, 2006 3:20 PM

Cara Lee said:

Edge fits the bill for managers though I would like to see more future technology roadmaps

December 23, 2006 6:53 PM

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