



@business on demand™

What is it again? ▶ Find out [now.](#)



search



About [itbusiness.ca](#)  
Advertise with [itbusiness.ca](#)  
Contact us  
Subscribe Online

Canada's IT  
Connection

Get Answers

- Data management
- e-Government
- Networking
- Wireless
- Channel
- Security
- Storage
- Training
- Infrastructure
- E-Business
- IT Opinions

Subscriber Services

- Print Publications
- IT e-Newsletter
- Our Partners

CDN  
**SOURCE  
GUIDE**  
Click Here

itbusiness.ca  
**CAREERS**  
CLICK HERE!  
powered by Workopolis

Advertise With Us

Privacy

Site Map

Help

Monday, November 24, 2003

EDGE, July 2003, Vol. 2 No. 7



print story



email to a friend

## Doing double duty

7/14/2003 11:24:46 AM - CIOs who wear two hats are a rare breed, but they do get a better perspective on how business views information systems

by *Grant Buckler*

"I thought that I had escaped," quips Paul Ingevaldson. After many years in information technology, Ingevaldson's boss at Ace Hardware Corp. invited him to trade the chief information officer's job for one outside IT. Ingevaldson agreed, and over several years held assorted non-IT jobs with the Oak

Brook, Ill., hardware retailer, ending up as vice-president of Ace's international business and head of its Canadian subsidiary.

Then, about six years ago, Ingevaldson's successor as CIO retired. Ingevaldson returned as CIO while retaining his other responsibilities. As senior vice-president international and technology, he became one of a rare breed — information systems executives who also hold responsibilities not directly related to IT.

Ingevaldson says having one foot outside the IT world gives him a better perspective on how the rest of the business views information systems.

"I think I'm more sensitive to the way I run it," he says. "I probably get more user involvement than I did before, but on the surface at least, the methodology is the same."

On the other hand, Ingevaldson says the demands of combining the two jobs are taxing. "You can imagine what it must be like to try to support a business in 70 countries and then also run an IT department." Traveling 100,000 to 150,000 miles a year, he relies heavily on a vice-president of information systems and "some extremely leading-edge staff." But the difficulty of juggling IT and other responsibilities seems to be the major reason why few executives hold this dual role and many organizations that try it out ultimately abandon it.

Around 1990, the vice-president of marketing at Home Hardware Inc. resigned. Terry Davis, then the St. Jacob's, Ont.-based retailer's vice-president of information systems, was first asked to fill in giving

Read Up

- Computing Canada
- Computer Dealer News
- EDGE
- Technology in Government
- Communications and Networking
- Direction
- Informatique
- IT Business Report

## ITBusiness.ca asks :

Has open source software made its way into your corporate environment?

We use open source on our back-end servers and will think about the desktop.

Yes, on back-end servers, but have no plans for the desktop.

We have deployed an open source desktop and are thrilled with it.

We have experimented with an open source desktop, but found it lacking. We are running open source on both our desktop and servers.

Vote  
Result

presentations at regional dealer meetings, and then a few months later offered a dual title: vice-president of marketing and information systems. The job mainly involved working with the company's retail stores, and his title was changed eventually to vice-president of IS and dealer development.

Davis had no marketing experience — "I had taken marketing courses at university" — but he was interested in getting involved with other aspects of the business than information technology. "I loved it," he says of the dual role he held for about 10 years. "I really felt it broadened my outlook, that I was able to see a completely different view of the organization that I wouldn't have got if I just remained strictly in IT."

Working with dealers helped Davis make Home Hardware's IT operations more sensitive to their needs, he says. Among other things, Davis involved dealers in more advisory committees dealing with IT issues.

There were disadvantages; the main one was he could not devote his full time to either role. "I think within the IT department there was sometimes a feeling that I was neglecting them," he says now.

He also had to make sure his dual role did not lead IT to give preferential treatment to the dealer development part of the company. "We had processes that we put in place to make sure we went through the normal checks and balances," Davis says. "I went out of my way to make sure that there was no favouritism."

Davis left his dual role in July of 2000 partly because management wanted him to devote his attention to IT, he says, but more because of Home Hardware's takeover of the Beaver Lumber chain, which brought additional talent into the company. Beaver Lumber's former chief executive took over the dealer development role. Davis, meanwhile, says he'd do it again, though he would want to divide his time effectively and have sufficient staff to make the dual role work.

CIOs who wear two hats are fairly rare. Citizen's Bank of Canada, a unit of Vancouver City Savings Credit Union, had a vice-president of credit and technology for a while, but the role disappeared when VanCity outsourced much of its IT operation. Provincial Crown corporation SaskPower had one vice-president responsible for finance and information systems a few years ago, and PanCanadian Petroleum Ltd. (now EnCana Corp.) had a senior vice-president of marketing and information technology.

Paul Rummell was the first CIO for the Canadian government, a job in which he provided technology strategy advice besides heading its internal IS operations. He moved from that job in 1999 to become CIO of consulting firm RLG International in Vancouver and president of an RLG subsidiary, RLG NetPerform, that develops technology for corporate performance improvement. "You really end up with two full-time jobs," Rummell says of that experience. "It does tend to be very long days." Rummell is now a senior advisor with consulting firm CAP Gemini Ernst & Young.

At Toronto law firm Borden Ladner Gervais LLP, Joel Alleyne holds the titles of chief information officer and chief knowledge officer. Those two roles may be more closely related than, say, information systems and international business, but Alleyne says the CKO's role is only about 10 per cent information technology. "It gets confused with IT because people think that managing knowledge is about managing IT," Alleyne says. In

fact, the chief knowledge officer is mainly concerned with how lawyers practice. "The main reason I have both portfolios is to force an alignment," he says. Getting IS more closely aligned with the business is the principal argument for combining the CIO's role with other senior management responsibilities, Alleyne says, though it may also be a way of getting IS a seat at the boardroom table.

 print story    email to a friend

[Back](#) [Back to Top](#)

@business on demand™

What is it again? ▶ Find out [now.](#)



Copyright © 2003 Transcontinental Media Inc. All rights reserved.