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AICPA Top Technology Initiatives

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According to the 19th American Institute of Certified Public Accountants' Annual Top Technology Initiatives survey, Information Security Management will be the most important initiative affecting IT strategy, investment and implementation in business organizations over the next 12 to 18 months. IT Governance is the second highest priority, reflecting the market's renewed emphasis on corporate governance and responsibility.

The AICPA poll was conducted in the Fall of 2007 together with ISACA, the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) and the Information Technology Alliance (ITA). A group of 1,169 AICPA ITMS members and CPA.CITP credential holders, auditors and IT executives identified the Top 10 most important technology initiatives for 2008 as follows:

1. Information Security Management
2. IT Governance
3. Business Continuity Management and Disaster Recovery Planning
4. Privacy Management
5. Business Process Improvement, Workflow, and Process Exceptions Alerts
6. Identity and Access Management
7. Conforming to Assurance and Compliance Standards
8. Business Intelligence
9. Mobile and Remote Computing

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who gets access to which systems and how, identifying what rights users have to modify data and tracking what individuals do while accessing your systems.

Many sources agree that IT Governance, the second most important technology initiative in the survey, is critical to help ensure an organization's maximal use of IT resources and overall performance. IT Governance is a component of corporate governance and is established so that key stakeholders, such as board-level executives, department heads, and other personnel who may have limited technical experience, can be informed and educated about their IT technologies and processes so that they can meaningfully participate in the organization's key decisions related to IT.

New Debuts and Honorable Mentions

While Information Security Management and IT Governance rated first and second, two technology initiatives made their debut in the top 10 technology initiatives — Business Process Improvement, Workflow and Process Exception Alerts (#5), and Business Intelligence (#8).

According to [Wikipedia](#), "Business Process Improvement (BPI) is a systematic approach to help any organization make significant changes in the way it does business." Within BPI, workflow identifies specific tasks to be completed, who performs them, in what order they are performed, and how information supports and monitors those tasks. Exception Alerts can then be implemented to notify management so they can make informed decisions to override agreed-upon processes rather than having them occur without oversight. Business Intelligence is essentially applying technology to collect, analyze and report an organization's information so that its decision makers can be better informed and more strategic in their decision making.

In addition to the above list, the AICPA also captured the next five technologies

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To explore this year's list and gain background information and practical examples on each initiative, attend the 2008 Top Technology Initiatives Web seminar to be held in May 2008. To register for this web seminar, the third in a series of webinars on the 2008 list, gain access to the technology definitions and learn more information about all the resources, guidance and tools available to the AICPA IT Section members when considering or implementing some of these initiatives, visit www.aicpa.org/toptech.

Technology

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