

# Application Consolidation: The Number One Business Imperative

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cutting costs today means more than just hardware consolidation. One of the biggest opportunities for CIOs to cut costs now is application rationalization. But how do you get complex consolidation projects moving forward with the business and get these mission-critical initiatives done faster? Visualization is a proven strategy for getting a clear view ahead and fundamentally transforming not only IT but the business itself.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Visualization: The Essential Strategy for Application Consolidation .....	2
Global Sourcing: A New Vision .....	4
UPS Bolsters Web App Development Process with Simulation Tool .....	6
Vision Validation .....	8
Rational Vision .....	11
Federal IT Project Failures: Proposed Legislation Aims to Stop the Insanity .....	13
Prototyping Tool Eases Design of iPhone Apps .....	15

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# Visualization: The Essential Strategy for Application Consolidation

BY SANDRA GITTLEN

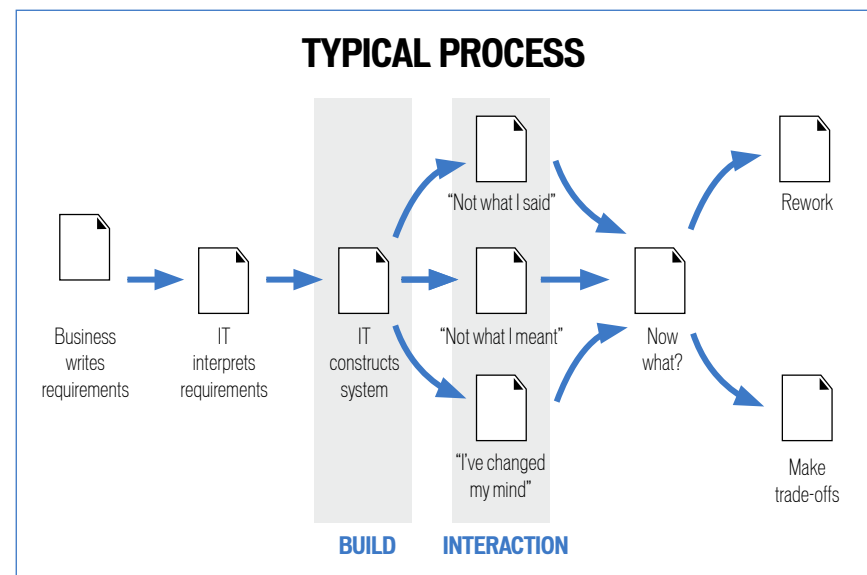
It's no secret that CIOs today are under incredible pressure to cut costs. In the previous economic downturn, many CIOs turned to data center consolidation and technologies like virtualization as their best and fastest way to trim expenses. For many companies, this strategy has paid off, but the pressure is on to do more.

The major portion of most IT budgets is dedicated to "keeping the lights on," or maintaining legacy systems that oftentimes are only used by a small number of people.

Most CIOs know that there can be tremendous wasted cost and overlap in functionality across their application portfolios. Yet in a good economy, it's nearly impossible to get the business to give up certain applications; it's always a battle with those few powerful business users.

As the economy takes another downturn, CIOs are once again changing their thinking. The luxury of maintaining a large application portfolio is a thing of the past. By eliminating legacy systems, IT leaders can save millions of dollars on licensing and infrastructure costs. The money saved can be given back to the business or reinvested in new revenue-generating or productivity-enhancing applications that are directly aligned with business goals. But how do you get business users to give up their systems? How can IT leaders get everyone on board with a common vision—and get there quickly?

Dr. Richard Frost, global director of information systems and services at General Motors, knew he had a



cost-saving opportunity in front of him. By consolidating the company's 22 country-specific portals for dealers around the world down to one portal, he would save money, use fewer human and network resources, and streamline business processes.

An earlier attempt at this process utilized manual requirements gathering, resulting in a frustrating design that forced the company's network of 14,000 dealers to revert to their individual portals. Rather than risking a similar outcome, the visionary Frost turned to application visualization to ensure the success of the software rationalization project.

With application visualization, companies can quickly simulate the end-state of a proposed reference application early in the process, before any coding happens. Business users from around the world can see and interact with the fully functional visualization and quickly get aligned behind a common vision. This helps companies intelligently downsize their application portfolio faster and produces better outcomes for the

business and customers

Being able to create a fully interactive, high-definition visualization of the application to solicit user feedback before actual coding and deployment prevents developer and IT cost overruns. For instance, the more accurately a simulation replicates the functionality of the final design, the better IT can predict the infrastructure needed to support the application, the fewer change orders developers will have to engage in, and the fewer calls IT will have to field from frustrated users. In fact, application visualization has proven to significantly boost user adoption rates and decrease time to market, both of which have a direct impact on a company's bottom line.

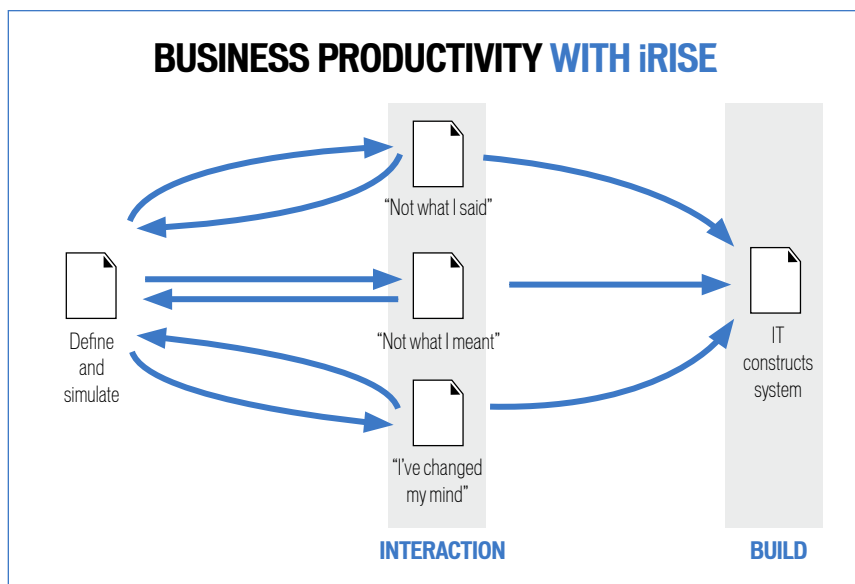
"Most executives and IT teams are actively looking for ways to trim their IT budgets. Some have gotten directives to cut a certain amount, others are being proactive. Either way, application visualization and rationalization is a solid strategy to find those savings," said Dennis Gaughan, a vice president at AMR Research.

Most organizations have already consolidated their hardware infrastructure and are hoping to do likewise to their applications portfolio to capitalize on advanced technologies such as virtualization. But first, they have to evaluate their application inventory and see where there are redundancies, such as multiple instances of SAP and Oracle, or how applications would react outside of their typical one-application-to-a-server environment.

At GM, Frost and his team partnered with global IT consultancy Capgemini to visualize a consolidated portal that would take into account the unique sales, service and parts application requirements of dealers in each country. Using software from iRise, GM was able to identify in less than six months that 94% of dealer business processes were common across all the portals, meaning application consolidation would indeed be the big win that Frost and his team had anticipated.

Typically, this kind of requirements gathering is a laborious task necessitating weeks, if not months, of back-and-forth among developers, business analysts and users, ultimately resulting in thousands of pages of ad hoc documentation. "In a traditional development approach, you have these voluminous MS Word documents that everyone hates to put together and very few people read. Also, the translation from what users say they need to what is put in the documentation creates discontinuities in what is eventually developed. It's a process that is definitely fraught with peril," Gaughan said.

With application visualiza-



tion, this process is dramatically streamlined and facilitates a direct pipeline between developers and users, removing the potential for misinterpretation. For instance, using iRise Studio, developers can translate initial requirements into application screens and flows, clearly demonstrating user interaction with the data. Then business analysts can share that simulation with users inside the firewall using iRise Reader's live application walkthroughs and guided reviews.

"You get to exchange the excruciatingly painful process of individu-

als digesting thick reports with a collaborative session that features rich visuals that are fully functional," said Mitch Bishop, chief marketing officer at iRise. He added that application stakeholders can gather in a room and in real time iterate the visualization until everyone is in agreement, dramatically speeding the requirements process.

Users outside the firewall can also provide input via iRise iDocs, a proprietary file format similar to an Adobe PDF, which allows them to interact with and review simulations offline and map comments to

elements on the screen. The iRise Definition Center is a collaboration server that collects and tracks all feedback. This streamlined process eliminates the normal confusion involved in application development and results in a more user-friendly application design.

"The simulations allow the business to visualize their business processes, clarify systems behaviors, and gain global consensus before the start of development," GM's Frost said. Because the simulation so closely approximates the end-state of the application, companies

## GLOBAL SOURCING: A NEW VISION

Budgets are tight, and CIOs are feeling the pressure to do more with less. Most companies have already turned to outsourcing as a strategy to cut maintenance and support costs. But in a struggling economy, it might make sense to look to global sourcing as a way to reduce application development expenses as well.

If well planned, outsourcing is a good option for companies of all sizes. However, if not well executed, this strategy can easily backfire with cost overruns and rollout delays. Effective definition, communication, project management and collaboration are all essential for a good outcome.

Many companies are now turning to application visualization as the key to successful global sourcing initiatives.

"Global sourcing is more attractive in this economy because you can get more done with the same amount of money. But it's also risky because often you're communicating across time zones, languages and cultures," said Mitch Bishop, chief marketing officer at iRise.

For instance, costs can quickly spin out of control if your sourcing partner has to rework a completed application. Even with fixed-bid contracts, change orders are common, and they often stem from miscommunication about requirements among business stakeholders, business analysts and developers. iRise helps you avoid these issues by giving everyone a common visualization of the end result. An iRise visualization lets everyone "test-drive" and fully experience the application before any expensive coding is done.

Projects that are being reworked and recoded will inevitably lead to delivery delays. Many companies can't tolerate a deployment delay, said Dennis

Gaughan, vice president at AMR Research. "In industries such as banking and insurance, the success of their business is predicated on their ability to quickly bring new services online. If they can provide an enhanced extension to an application faster than their competitor, they'll win the customer," he said.

Gaughan added that companies can have users review a simulation during their business hours and then have the overseas developer turn around updates overnight, dramatically reducing the overall development cycle.

Visualization is an essential ingredient for successful outsourcing project outcomes and can be used even as you are choosing an outsourcing partner. If the partner is engaged with you during the proposal pursuit process using interactive, high-fidelity visualizations, it demonstrates their commitment to getting the requirements right the first time. The use of visualization can result in better estimates and act as a guide for your project managers and business analysts who are tasked with ensuring the project stays on track.

Visualization also frees business analysts to become a more strategic part of the application definition process. In fact, Gaughan said the success of application visualization and rationalization projects depends on the skill level of the business analyst leading the project. "Companies that have done well with their projects have done so because the business analyst understood business drivers and strategies as well as technology," he said.

All of these benefits help make global sourcing a far less risky strategy. "Our customers tell us that by using iRise visualization, they get to market twice as fast for 30% less cost," Bishop said.

like GM are able to get a jump-start on user training, which helps speed deployment and improve adoption.

## Merger Success

Application visualization and rationalization is not just for use on internal programs. It can also be instrumental in improving the deployment of consolidated customer-facing applications.

For instance, when SunTrust Bank acquired National Commerce Financial (NCF) in 2004 to become the seventh largest retail bank in the United States, executives worried they would experience a drop-off in NCF's one million customers if they didn't release an online banking application that was familiar to them.

The company used iRise to elicit

requirements from NCF and SunTrust customers and simulate a new online application that would appeal to both groups. They invited customers to test-drive the application and offer feedback before they started actual development. Thanks to this highly interactive process, they were able to put a new application into production within five months that required no rework. Executives reported that 95% of NCF customers signed on with SunTrust within the first 30 days.

"The benefits of compelling online products and services are impressive in terms of impact to the bottom line, increased loyalty and customer acquisition. With iRise simulations, we are able to ensure that we are building the right appli-

cations for our customers the first time," said David Nix, vice president of online banking at SunTrust.

For companies to succeed in an economic downturn, they have to dig deeper than mere infrastructure consolidation to cut costs. They need to turn their attention to applications that help retain customers, streamline business partner operations, and improve collaboration among employees. "Application visualization and rationalization provides the type of value proposition that customers are looking for in [a struggling] economic climate," said Gaughan. ▸

*Sandra Gittlen is a Massachusetts-based technology writer and former senior editor at Network World.*



# UPS Bolsters Web App Development Process with Simulation Tool

Shipper cuts friction between end users and IT by simulating the UI before apps are built.

BY HEATHER HAVENSTEIN

This article originally appeared in the April 16, 2008 edition of *Computerworld*.

It's a scenario that has become all too familiar in many companies. After months or even years of work, the IT shop proudly presents a new application that the designers and architects believe exactly meets the business requirements provided them. Then end users tell them, "This isn't what we asked for."

One of the most common causes of such costly quandaries is a disconnect in the requirements process when user needs are not accurately relayed to the designers and developers. The quest to bridge this gap spawned an entire industry of vendors building tools that can better interpret requirements and ensure that they are infused into various cycles of the development process.

Some companies are opting for another alternative. For example, United Parcel Service Inc. has overhauled its process of designing user interfaces for all new and up-

graded Web applications.

As part of the effort, UPS replaced its Microsoft Visio diagramming tool set with application simulation and authoring software from iRise Inc. about a year ago and now gets user approval on new user interfaces very early in the requirements-gathering process. That, said Guy Hamblen, project manager in UPS's corporate repository and architecture business unit, allows the company's 7,500-person IT unit to deliver better applications faster.

The iRise Studio definition and authoring tool is designed to create fully interactive replicas of Web application user interfaces that support user interaction and feedback before development work starts. Other companies, including CNA Financial Corp. and Wachovia Corp., also use iRise technology to simulate user-interface designs.

Visio, Hamblen noted, did not simulate how the user would interact with an application.

"The biggest challenge that an application development team has is eliciting the correct requirements at the beginning of the development effort," he said. "In the traditional software-development life cycle, oftentimes the user doesn't see the developed effort until the user acceptance test, [which is] late in the development life cycle and only months away from deployment. If the user says, 'That's not what I wanted' at that late stage, you lose a significant amount of time correcting the problem."

By modeling the user interface in the requirements phase, the design team can be sure that it knows exactly what the user wants because it has

used a simulated version, he noted. The simulation can then be an artifact for the designers and developers.

“That ripples throughout the whole development life cycle,” Hamblen added. “That allowed us to improve our time to market with application-development releases. That is the fundamental business driver that iRise enabled for us.”

In addition, UPS uses the iRise tool to support its offshore development projects. It “becomes a very valuable artifact where communications barriers are broken down and an offshore development team can see exactly what it is they need to deliver,” Hamblen said.

For UPS, successfully rolling out the iRise tool to 160 users in seven business units was dependent upon the early senior management support of the technology, Hamblen noted. The company’s CIO endorsed the initiative and held his direct reports accountable for rapid adoption of the tool.

In addition, UPS created a “just-in-time” training program to provide users with hands-on experience immediately after classes so the lessons would be fresh when

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 **GUY HAMBLEN**  
**PROJECT MANAGER, UPS**

they tackled the technology. UPS also kept iRise mentors on site following the training program to work with the business analysts who develop models, and it created webcasts to promote the use of technology. Newly formed user groups associated with each business unit were created to champion use of the iRise tool and to answer any questions that popped up.

“We set up a centralized deployment infrastructure to track the rapid deployment of applications and get immediate feedback from

the user community as it was occurring,” Hamblen said. “That whole process enabled us to deploy the application development tool very rapidly into business units.”

Hamblen noted that it has been difficult to come up with hard metrics to measure the success of the new tool. In traditional software development, he said, “success is often noted in how many defects you have ... and when you find those defects.”

“By being able to simulate the UI, we’ve had many instances where the user would say categorically, ‘That is not what I envisioned when I gave you my written requirements,’” Hamblen said.

An experienced iRise user can make the changes on the fly and demonstrate the new behavior to the user during that stakeholder meeting, which is a significant enhancement to a traditional development process,” he said. “Obviously, in our old methodology, the user would not have seen that ambiguous requirement until the user acceptance test maybe three or more months later.” ▸

# Vision Validation

**Seeing is believing. Visualization software saves companies time, money and a whole lot of unnecessary false starts.**

**A**t a time when IT departments have tight budgets and are pressured to do more with less, companies can't afford to take risks when it comes to consolidation projects, especially when the development work is outsourced.

As IT managers revamp their strategies to lower costs and develop software more quickly, visualization has proven to be a successful way to show business stakeholders what the end-state of a software project will look like in advance. Visualizations also allow users to test-drive the proposed application before development is under way, enabling them to verify that the right product is being built the first time.

Eliminating rework and change orders not only enables a company to bring a new application to market more quickly, but it also saves IT departments and business units much needed time and money that could be spent on new revenue-generating projects.

The following are just three examples of the hundreds of companies that have experienced ongoing success by integrating iRise visualizations into their application development process.

## GM's Next Step for Visual Modeling

Responding to customer demands efficiently and adapting to changing market conditions are challenging for any IT team, but such challenges are manageable at General Motors, thanks to the introduction of software visual modeling.

Known for visual modeling for the design of vehicles, GM partnered with iRise and Capgemini to create enterprise-wide visual modeling technology that simulates the user experience of software applications before their actual use. GM has incorporated this technology into its global processes to produce simulations that ultimately result in more user-friendly IT systems.

"GM is a pioneer in visual modeling and has led IT to a tipping point where simulation and user-centered design will become the standard for application development," said Corey Glickman, global leader of Rapid Design and Visualization at Capgemini. "Implementing system visualization across the enterprise allows GM to bridge the gap between IT, the business and the users of each software application."

Software visual modeling is now a standard development process at GM, which allows GM to provide "precision IT"—a technology platform that brings together multiple communities such as GM designers, customer representatives, dealers and customers. This helps GM boost innovation, cut costs, and speed up delivery time.

"For a century, GM has success-

fully and consistently built high-quality cars and trucks by first creating product simulations or models,” said Fred Killeen, chief systems and technology officer at GM. “Applying this expertise to visual modeling of software enables GM to deliver increasingly collaborative, innovative and user-centric products to our employees and customers.”

Deploying visualization software from iRise and using a rapid prototyping process developed by Capgemini, GM has already implemented a number of business applications built from this modeling process that have accelerated time-to-market, cut project costs, and increased the adoption of applications. On average, visual modeling

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**■ COREY GLICKMAN**  
**■ GLOBAL LEADER OF RAPID DESIGN AND VISUALIZATION, CAPGEMINI**

reduced project duration by 10%, and the projects received very high customer satisfaction ratings.

By meeting the specific needs and unique desires of IT product users up front, visualization software can

transform the way people, processes and technology work at companies of all sizes. Companies eliminate miscommunications among product users, business managers and IT architects, improve application development delivery times and, most of all, cut project costs.

## SunTrust Exceeds Delivery Expectations

At SunTrust Banks Inc., visualization not only helped ease the merging of two banks, but also helped speed up application development time well beyond expectations.

In 2004, SunTrust acquired National Commerce Financial (NCF) to become the seventh largest retail bank in the United States. The business owners at SunTrust faced the challenge of retaining more than one million new customers while at the same time raising consumer awareness of the bank as a technology leader. An entirely new online banking application had to be delivered in less than six months, with an aggressive benchmark of 92% online customer retention in 90 days. It was clear that traditional text-based specifications were not going to get them there.

SunTrust used iRise to quickly create high-definition simulations of the proposed new online solution. Using iRise, SunTrust business analysts were able to quickly elicit requirements from project stakeholders and then let everyone involved test-drive the new system before any development had taken place. In just four weeks a fully functional visualization of the proposed new site was

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**■ DAVID NIX, VICE PRESIDENT OF ONLINE BANKING, SUNTRUST**

completed and the business owners had received the go-ahead from the steering committee and marketing department to begin development.

“The benefits of compelling online products and services are impressive in terms of impact to the bottom line, increased loyalty and customer acquisition,” said David Nix, SunTrust’s vice president of online banking. “As we began the project to deliver an enhanced online experience for our customers, we knew we needed a more effective way to validate user requirements. With iRise simulations, we are able to ensure that we are building the right applications for our customers the first time.”

Using the iRise simulation as a visual blueprint, the development team delivered the final application into

production in just five months with literally no rework—well ahead of the original 11-month estimate given prior to the introduction of iRise into the process. The business owners were ecstatic to find that they exceeded their retention goals: 95% of NCF customers signed up for the new online banking portal in just 30 days.

## More Time for Staff, Patients at M.D. Anderson Medical Center

At the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Medical Center, every minute is crucial to finding a cure for cancer and treating patients. The cancer-only care hospital helps some 70,000 patients each year and helps develop new weapons against cancer with its extensive research and teaching facilities.

Time is of the essence for medical staff at this specialized institution; the more time they can spend tending to patients and not on administrative tasks leads to better care for patients. So when MDA's Electronic Medical Records (EMR) department was tasked with developing an online solution to automate its patient needs assessment process, it was important to come up with a system that wouldn't consume the medical staff in the development stage.

Because MDA is a highly specialized institution, out-of-the-box EMR

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**O'DELL HUTCHISON**  
**BUSINESS SYSTEMS ANALYST,**  
**M.D. ANDERSON CANCER CENTER**

solutions do not meet its needs. So the IT team turned to iRise simulation tools, which allow the EMR department to define and develop its own custom-built applications.

M.D. Anderson worked with iRise to implement the Patient Needs Assessment module for documenting patient vital signs and allergies. Project stakeholders in these development projects are clinical and research nurses who solicit and utilize needs assessment data. It was imperative that the EMR department reduce the development cycle to allow hospital staff to spend less time defining and reviewing software and more time tending to patients. Prior this module, M.D. Anderson implemented a similar module, which took 10 months for final end-user approval.

“iRise significantly cuts down the time needed to elicit requirements from hospital staff and iterate workflow improvements, allowing doctors and nurses more time to spend with patients,” said O'Dell Hutchison, business systems analyst at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center.

During the definition phase, business analysts interviewed more than 20 staff members for project requirements. In real time, business analysts plugged the requirements directly into an iRise simulation. Stakeholders immediately saw the proposed workflow and recognized areas for improvement they could not visualize when drafting requirements.

Feedback solicited in these initial meetings dramatically reduced the need for multiple follow-up review sessions. With the flow approved, the EMR department enhanced the visual fidelity of the simulation to look like a final application. During the requirements gathering cycle, developers were included to ensure that the high-fidelity simulation looked very similar to the final product. This enabled trainers to develop educational materials directly from the simulation and accelerated adoption as hospital staff members received a familiar application.

As a result of simulating the needs assessment project in iRise prior to coding, the EMR department cut the development cycle in half and delivered the online application in five months. The ultimate beneficiary: patients, who now receive the needed attention from medical staff. ▶

# Rational Vision



**I**T executives who believe they've already hit the bottom of the barrel with cost cutting will be happy to know there is still opportunity for reducing costs. iRISE CEO and Co-Founder Emmet B. Keeffe recently spoke with Technology Editor Sandra Gittlen about how IT and application development teams can uncover significant savings by using application visualization and rationalization.

**Q: What is the current state of IT budgets?**

**A:** Whenever there's a recession budgets are either flat or reduced by 5% to 10%. Over the past few years, companies have handled reductions through hardware consolidation and rationalization. Many CIOs have already pulled that cost out of their business. So this time around they are targeting application development costs. They are looking at the fact that they probably have multiple human resources, finance, ERP and other systems and they need to rationalize them. Also, they are hoping to go forward with new revenue-generating application projects but have to do so at the lowest possible development cost.

**Q: How have they traditionally handled these rationalization and development tasks?**

**A:** It's been challenging because users are often on different systems

and are attached to those systems. It can be incredibly political. There are also obstacles because the only approach they've known for revamping legacy applications or deploying new ones is lengthy and cumbersome. They have to create use cases and business-process-flow diagrams and other complex documentation by hand. A spec for a large strategic system could wind up being thousands of pages long. It's hard to sift through all that and know whether the proposed system will ultimately meet their needs, and it makes stakeholders nervous about the outcome. In the end, they find they'd rather stay on multiple systems.

“Application visualization and rationalization speed time to market by 30% to 50%.”

**EMMET B. KEEFFE**  
CEO, iRISE

**Q: What role does global sourcing play in all of this?**

**A:** When it comes to strategic development, it can be difficult to leverage the benefits of global sourcing. It can take days or weeks for an offshore outsourcer or even an in-house, off-site developer to pore through the piles of user requirements gathered by a business analyst. And oftentimes, the prototype they create misses the mark because they misinterpreted that documentation. This winds up costing companies in terms of delays in application rollouts, low user adoption because of frustrating design flaws, and money spent on reworking programs.

**Q: How do iRise's application visualization and rationalization tools solve these critical problems?**

**A:** The impact is similar to the effect that computer-aided design had on the auto manufacturing industry. Rather than having to build a prototype of the car during the development process,

they were able to perfect the design using simulation software. We've made the same thing available for IT and developer teams. Instead of coding the full application up front, IT and developers can create a simulation of the product to gather feedback from users. This saves at least 30% on over-

all development costs and increases user adoption because the final tool is more in line with user expectations. Most importantly, application visualization and rationalization speed time to market by 30% to 50%, which results in a competitive advantage and ultimately more revenue. ▶

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*Over the last 15 years Emmet B. Keeffe III has applied his philosophy of "the network is the business" to become one of the most well-connected CEOs in the software industry. As CEO and co-founder of iRise, Emmet has leveraged his network to close over \$60 million in investment funding and drives leadership of sales, marketing and business development. Prior to co-founding iRise, his career included sales positions at NetDynamics, Auspex Systems, Dasonics and Minolta. Emmet is also a member of the Young Presidents' Organization (YPO) and a member of the Board of Trustees at The Partnership Scholars, a foundation focused on improving education for disadvantaged students.*

# Federal IT Project Failures: Proposed Legislation Aims to Stop the Insanity

BY MERIDITH LEVINSON

“We’re trying to apply best practices from the commercial side into the federal IT space. ... We have had real documented commercial success on the private side that we think could be applied here.”

 **MITCH BISHOP**  
CMO, iRISE

This article originally appeared in the December 9, 2008 edition of *CIO*.

The U.S. Government has a sordid history of IT project failures. There’s the FBI’s virtual case file system, which the agency scrapped in 2005 after sinking \$170 million into it; the \$8 billion systems modernization the IRS launched nearly 10 years ago; and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services’ \$190 million automation effort, to name just a few standouts.

Naturally, the government’s solution to its IT project management problems has been legislation. The Information Technology Management Reform Act of 1996, also known as the Clinger-Cohen Act, requires federal agencies to hire strategic CIOs who can implement best practices for managing IT from the corporate world in the public sector. Agency heads are required under Section 11317 of Title 40 of the U.S. Code to identify in their IT management plans any major IT project that “has significantly deviated from

the cost, performance or schedule goals established” for that project.

Now there’s new legislation making its way through Congress aimed at improving the success rates of federal IT projects. If passed, the Information Technology Investment Oversight Enhancement and Waste Prevention Act of 2008 would provide more accountability for federal IT project failures. In short, it would require agency heads and their CIOs to report to the appropriate congressional committee and to the Government Accountability Office (GAO) on their agency’s most mission-critical IT projects that don’t meet original performance requirements or exceed original cost and schedule estimates by 20 percent or more.

In the event of a cost or schedule overrun of 40 percent or more, the Information Technology Investment Oversight Enhancement and Waste Prevention Act specifies remedial actions agencies need to take to get projects back on track, including identifying three cost-effective alternatives to the ailing project. The proposed bill would also require the Office of Management and Budget’s e-government administrator to put together a special team of certified project and program managers from the public and private sectors to help agencies avoid cost and schedule overruns.

The question is, will this legislation finally do the trick, or is it just a way for the IT industry to get more of the government’s business in consulting contracts and software licenses?

CIO.com’s Meridith Levinson spoke to Mitch Bishop, CMO of vi-

sualization software provider iRise, which is a proponent of the legislation, about the IT Waste Prevention Act and iRise's interest in it. Bishop isn't even convinced the bill, which he says is likely to be passed in 2009, will be sufficient to prevent federal IT projects from careening out of control.

**Q: Do you really think this legislation, if passed, is going to make a difference in the success or failure of federal IT projects?**

**A:** I don't know if it's going to make a difference or not, but what will be different is that projects in distress will be much more visible. What's different here is the level of transparency. We'll finally be able to track root causes for these failures. Our point of view is that many projects that are already in distress—much of that failure is tied to bad requirements.

**Q: If federal agencies are only reporting on projects once they're in distress, what good does that do? Isn't that too little, too late?**

**A:** It remains to be seen whether it will improve the success rate of the project. It will certainly draw attention to the projects that are successful and the projects in distress that are using public money. Long term,



it will have a net positive effect in preventing failures because failures will be more transparent and more publicly accessible. There are already a lot of projects in distress, but how many of them have we heard about?

**Q: Do you think this legislation will really help get at root causes, or will it just create more government bureaucracy?**

**A:** The reporting may be bureaucracy, but Norm Brown [executive director of the Center for Program Transformation, who testified before a senate subcommittee on the dismal state of federal IT projects] is recommending that IT professionals from the private sector help

get these projects back on the rails and get a set of best practices from the commercial world to become standard for government IT.

**Q: Has iRise had any hand in crafting this legislation? What's iRise's interest in the Waste Prevention Act?**

**A:** iRise has not had any part in crafting this legislation. It drew our attention because the problems they're describing in this testimony are exactly the problems we help solve. We have a federal sector office now. We see the federal IT business as an opportunity for us, not only to sell our product and get visualization in use in the federal government but also as a way to help improve the efficiency of tax-payer dollars.

**Q: By throwing more tax-payer dollars into the purchase of software?**

**A:** Our customers tell us that using iRise, they're able to get their projects to market twice as fast with about 30 percent less cost. We're trying to apply best practices from the commercial side into the federal IT space. If we were a startup without much success, I could understand it remains to be seen, but we have had real documented commercial success on the private side that we think could be applied here. ▶

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*As the head of overall marketing strategy and execution at iRise for the last five years, Mitch Bishop has built strong ties to CIOs and IT leaders at both large and small companies. With his leadership, iRise has grown its customer base tenfold and become the market leader in a new industry category: application visualization. Mitch has many years of marketing and sales experience building successful enterprise software businesses at Scopus, Sybase, Wind River Systems and Ingres. He has also held senior engineering positions at Altos Computer Systems, Zilog and Amdahl.*

# Prototyping Tool Eases Design of iPhone Apps

**iRise's new software suite allows iPhone developers to create prototypes that look and behave like an application but don't have the underlying code.**

BY STEPHEN LAWSON

This article originally appeared in the April 29, 2008 edition of *InfoWorld*.

Enterprises that want to create applications for Apple's iPhone will be able to build and try out prototypes using a special programming template unveiled on Tuesday.

It's the latest template from iRise, which has been selling a prototyping platform for other types of applications for six years. The El Segundo, California, company introduced it at the Software 2008 trade show, being held in conjunction with Interop in Las Vegas.

The iPhone is a coveted gadget, selling 1.7 million units in the year's first quarter, with Apple forecasting 10 million iPhones in the market by the end of 2008. So far, application builders who want to reach iPhone users have had to get their code to run on the phone's Safari browser, but Apple's recently released SDK lets them write applications to run directly on the phone.

The iRise software suite is used

to create prototypes that look and behave like an application but don't have the underlying code. This lets in-house or outside programmers, and even nonprogrammers, design an application quickly and easily just for demonstration. Then decision makers, such as business executives, can see how it would work and sign off on the project, according to Mitch Bishop, chief marketing officer at iRise. Using a mock-up

The [iRise] template can simulate all of the iPhone's standard menu icons and user actions, such as using sliders and zooming in and out of screens by "pinching" and "unpinching."

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of the user interface tells executives more than pages of description, he said.

"Their attitude is, 'I'll know it when I see it,'" Bishop said. Traditionally, the business side of an enterprise doesn't get to see a new application in action until it's largely complete. "By then, it's really expensive to make changes," he said.

About 180 customers, mostly Fortune 500 companies, already use iRise for projects, including Web-based applications, portals, and SAP implementations, according to

Bishop. The company already has a few customers using the iPhone template, he said.

“The promise of the iPhone is that people see it as a vast leap ahead in customer experience, and it’s a consistent platform,” Bishop said. By contrast, most mobile-software platforms vary by both carrier and device.

The template can simulate all of the iPhone’s standard menu icons and user actions, such as using sliders and zooming in and out of screens by “pinching” and “unpinching.” Application designers can use it to create custom buttons, manipulate the menu icons and define the ef-

fects of actions such as double-tapping a button, Bishop said.

The iPhone simulations will run on a desktop rather than an actual iPhone, with users interacting with the virtual phone using a mouse. There is a downloadable tool for using simulations based on iRise, so companies developing iPhone applications will be able to send simulations to average consumers and get feedback.

OneSpring, a business-analysis and user-experience design company in Atlanta, uses the iRise iPhone template in an application simulation toolkit it calls the SimDK. OneSpring has helped enterprises

define applications based on some other mobile platforms, said Chuck Konfrst, a senior user experience architect at OneSpring.

“Most applications, if you design them for mobile devices, are very text-heavy,” Konfrst said. The iPhone’s display capabilities give designers more freedom and a whole new set of choices, he said. OneSpring offers a video to demonstrate.

The iRise template for the iPhone is free to users of iRise, which costs about \$5,000 per seat, according to Bishop. The OneSpring iPhone SimDK for iRise will be available from OneSpring starting May 1 for \$495. ▶