COMPANY
OF THE MONTH

Frank M Lenarduzzi,
Chief Commercial Officer,
Storgrid

Cyber adAPT:
Balancing the BYOD-Security Equation

Kirsten Bay,
President & CEO

How CIOs Think: 4 Strategies for Enabling BYOD Innovation

By Ann Herrmann, CEO, Herrmann International

According to a recent IBM study, 83 percent of users consider their mobile device to be more important than their morning cup of coffee, and 82 percent believe smartphones are integral to their work. It's clear that BYOD is here to stay. Not only that, the payoff is just as clear: numerous studies show that adoption of BYOD fosters increased employee satisfaction, creativity, flexibility, and productivity.

BYOD is also a great example of the increased expectations surrounding the CIO's role as strategic enabler and innovation driver. From the business press to the boardroom, CIOs have been encouraged to shift their thinking, to embrace a new "I"—Innovation—and surveys show that CIOs agree with this direction.

But you may have discovered that the reality of your day-to-day work, including the delivery of a BYOD culture, means you're consumed by a different job entirely, that of Chief Implementation Officer.

While the proliferation of BYOD, BYOA, MDM, and other emerging technologies essential to the business has raised the profile of the CIO, it's also made it harder for most CIOs to stay strategic and future focused. A recent McKinsey study bears this out, finding that the percentage of executives who say IT facilitates their companies' ability to enter new markets has actually dropped, from 57 percent in 2012 to 35 percent in 2015. Furthermore, only 38 percent say that the CIO is very or extremely involved in shaping business strategy around technology enablement or innovation.

The trend isn't surprising. After all, if you're mired in the day-to-day of implementing and managing a complex enterprise initiative like BYOD, it's tough to connect and collaborate more closely with the lines of business at a strategic level, never mind finding the time for visionary thinking. The problem is you can't really serve the organization, both now and tomorrow, without a future-focused eye and attention to the business and people issues that go beyond the technical.

BYOD: A Lever for Innovation

One argument for BYOD's innovation potential is that it provides employees with a level of freedom and personalization that can lead to new pathways for getting work done. When employees have more control over the devices they use, they can get more creative about how they do the work and how those devices can be leveraged, setting the stage for improved business processes, greater flexibility, and increased productivity.

Here's an example: Our research shows that the way different people prefer to think affects the way they manage deadlines, tasks, projects, and even how they view time. As a result, time and project management techniques that work great for one employee may be frustrating and distracting for another. BYOD gives employees the flexibility to select the tools that work best for them.

But freedom doesn't mean free reign. The CIO still has to balance enabling more personalized and creative approaches to work with careful research, planning, communication, and cost-benefit analyses. By the same token, paying attention to future possibilities and strategic needs doesn't mean that today's problems don't need solving. The security and controls issues, the information management challenges, the policies and procedures surrounding BYOD—all have to be handled.

But if you want to make good on the innovation promise of BYOD, the first step is recognizing that it's not an either/or proposition. Your role as CIO requires not only great execution, shaping business strategy and culture, and managing risk and costs, but also enabling employees to find better ways to get their work done, and making sure they're engaged—not burnt out—from the accessibility BYOD offers them.

In a world that demands adaptability and thinking shifts from moment to moment, agile is a term that applies to more than just software development: it's the definition of successful leadership. Fortunately, when it comes to building your agility to enable BYOD innovation, you're already bringing one of the best devices available to work every day: your brain.

Ann Herrmann

BYO-Brain to Develop Your Agility

Our research on the brain and business results has revealed interesting insights about how thinking preferences affect work performance. Initially conducted at GE's Management Development Institute at Crotonville, the studies have continued over the past 30+ years through our work with organizations of every industry and size across the globe, resulting in a database of more than two million thinkers, including CIOs.

The Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument (HBDI) research we conduct scientifically demonstrates that most of us prefer certain modes of thinking over others, and that we each have access to more thinking than we might be leveraging.

As a metaphor for how people tend to use their brains and how their thinking works, our Whole Brain Thinking framework shows that thinking falls into four different preference clusters:
A. Performance: Analytical, logical, quantitative thinking
B. Process: Organized, planful, action-oriented thinking
C. People: Interpersonal, communicative, customer-focused thinking
D. Possibilities: Strategic, innovative, conceptual thinking

From our research, we know that once people learn about their preferences and how to stretch and apply their thinking more deliberately, they can lead more effectively and think more strategically to drive innovation, especially when they're dealing with complexity and change. The implications are particularly relevant to the challenges CIOs are facing.

How to Shift Your Thinking to Become a Strategic Enabler

Our database of thinkers provides insight into the thinking profiles of different occupations, including preferences as well as specific work elements within those preferences.

The strongest preference for CIOs is, unsurprisingly, the "A–Performance" quadrant, with a focus on problem solving, data, analytical thinking, and technical aspects. This preference leads CIOs to think first and foremost about technology, risk management, and data infrastructure needs when considering a program like BYOD. This can, in turn, lead others to view CIOs as gatekeepers, always needing solid data and analysis to make a decision. Also significant, CIOs ranked financial work elements low in this quadrant, which could hinder getting buy-in.

• **Strategy:** Stretch beyond the analytical focus of the "A" quadrant to build a better business case, and be sure to do the homework on the financial benefits and implications.

The CIOs' second most-preferred quadrant is "D–Possibilities," which is often a good basis for innovative thinking. But the data reveals that most CIOs are oriented more towards the conceptual and intuitive problem solving elements of this quadrant, compared to innovative and creative thinking. This doesn't mean innovative thinking's not available to you; it just means you need to make a deliberate effort to access it. That's not easy when you're facing a barrage of daily execution-oriented activities.

• **Strategy:** Set aside specific time for innovative thinking, and surround yourself with more creative thinkers. Then focus on using innovative problem-solving strategies beyond analysis to turn issues into opportunities and engage the perspectives of others.

Not only do the HBDI profiles reveal areas of strong preference, they also reveal lesser preferences—those areas people tend to overlook or even avoid. CIOs tend to focus less on the "B–Process quadrant of execution, planning, details, policy development, and compliance. No wonder many CIOs complain of getting bogged down in the weeds of programs like BYOD. Not only are they often resource constrained, the data shows they're typically more comfortable with planning and high-level implementation versus the organization, detail, and administration that policy development and deployment requires.

• **Strategy:** Take the time upfront to bring together the right team to project manage and execute the program, including thinkers from across all four quadrants, but especially those who love detail, timelines, and policy development.

The data shows that the least-preferred kind of thinking for CIOs is the "C–People" quadrant: how issues affect employees, how others feel, communication, teaching, user friendliness, and similar areas, many of which are also part of a successful team process. Out of 16 possible work elements, interpersonal ranked 10th, teaching/training/coaching 13th, and writing 14th.

How many times have you been frustrated, thinking, "We told everyone what we're doing. Why don't they get it?" For any enterprise-wide initiative to be successful, you have to understand your "customer," drawing on C-quadrant thinking, and effectively engage and communicate. Too often, communication is geared towards a specific kind of thinker and ultimately fails to connect with the broader population that needs to read/see/hear it in order to "get it."

Clear, engaging communication that creates an understanding of what's at stake will significantly reduce compliance issues and the risk of inadvertent data breaches. If they don't hear it, they won't know it, and they certainly won't do it!

• **Strategy:** Make communication a priority and think about it differently than you might have before. What can you learn from other enterprise-wide initiatives that have had great response and engagement? Consider partnering with the communications function if that's an option.

According to the Harvey Nash CIO 2015 Survey, 56 percent of CIOs believe the most important component of successful digital activity is having an IT infrastructure that allows greater innovation and agility. BYOD is a prime opportunity. However, unless you're using all the brainpower available to you, both within your own head and the organization, you will miss the chance BYOD provides for you to fully shift to the role of strategic enabler. Use your best device—the brain—to make the I in CIO clearly stand for Innovation.

HBDI® and Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument® are registered trademarks of Herrmann Global, LLC.