

CEO View**What technologies have you adopted in the past year and which do you expect to adopt in the year ahead?**

In conjunction with the Alliance of Chief Executives in Walnut Creek, the Business Times regularly meets with CEOs to discuss the state of business in the East Bay. Here are excerpts from those roundtable discussions.



Jim Drury
CEO
BenefitStreet, Inc.
San Ramon

"We constantly are looking for ways to make everything be ASP, everything be on the Internet, everything be accessible because we're moving around all the time. If it isn't possible today, I'd say it will be possible within a year to take the whole company totally ASP."



Pamela Kan
CEO
Bishop-Wisecarver
Corporation, Pittsburg

"All of our salesmen are on Blackberries. That seems to have worked in terms of communications. We have salesmen all the way across the country and there used to be a lot of frustrations with inside sales not getting direct response from our salesmen. But now they're constantly seeing their e-mail. We are now in the process of installing completely new software at our company – all new CRM, ERP. Right now we have a bunch of little stand alone systems. None of them are relational. We chose SYSPRO."



Bill Shepard
Executive Director
COO Connection
San Jose

"This year we put Salesforce.com into our content management. We are able to collaborate with and keep track of the COOs that are in the group and the potential new ones. We are converting our internal collaboration systems for COOs to a group called Linkify which is based in the East Bay and is a wonderful knowledge management collaboration model that will enable all of our COOs to be in touch with each other and will also allow us to run the association from inside Linkify."



Robert Sher
CEO
Bentley Publishing
Group, Walnut Creek

"What we put into play last year that was very effective was a dynamic catalog maker. It's a hand custom tool that allows our customers to tell us what of our products they want shown in our catalog and to build catalog pages ultimately in Adobe Acrobat so that we can send them a customized catalog with their name which they can print out or use. That used Adobe Acrobat on the back end and a Foxboro programmer. What we are starting to get into next year is on Microsoft's central portal. They have a program called SharePoint that allows different work groups to work together."



Dean Wilson
President
Employment Research
Services, Dublin

"In the last year, the largest thing we have done is essentially gutted our entire

IT platform and started over – new computers, new hardware, new servers, new software, the only thing we kept the same was our main operating system but we have built on four proprietary applications that we've cooked ourselves. In the next year, we are going to be installing a phone system. Right now we have an analog phone system that ties together plain old telephone lines and we're going to get a voice over IP system."



DC Cullinane
CEO
ThinkingVoice
Mountain View

"We had a geographically dispersed group of engineers in addition to some business development folks, so we've been able to deploy some third-party Asterisk, which is a PBX-like solution. It allows me to be on a laptop and plug my USB phone in and take and receive calls as if I were in the office. That's a good example of how you can take some open source, third-party software and integrate it with your own platform or communications infrastructure."



John Bohannon
CEO
Builders Control, Inc.
Oakland

"A couple years ago we thought about going wireless with our reporting and posting it onto the Web and the contractors weren't ready for it. They just weren't sophisticated enough end users so we dropped the idea. Now the banks are coming to us and demanding it so we've got to build the platform. We're going to have to figure out a way to educate the end user. So for us, our technology will be going to the Web and wireless."