

## TX K-12 CTO Council Round Table Questions

1. **VDI** (Presented and Moderated by John Orbaugh) – (40 minutes)  
Discussion Starter: Cloud computing is a term that encompasses many sets of technology. Cloud computing can relate to virtualizing your servers or application either in your data center as part of a private cloud, or on an external data center as part of a public cloud or some combination of both in a hybrid cloud. For our discussion today our focus will be on the aspect of desktop virtualization.
  - Who has started exploring the options for desktop virtualization?
  - Who is implementing desktop virtualization?
  - What solutions have you explored and what were the pluses and minuses you found?
  - How did you test the solutions to determine what would or would not work for your technology environment?
  - What are your ultimate goals for converting your district to this technology?
  - What results are you seeing and what is next on your horizon for this technology?
2. **Outsourcing of staff & student storage** (Moderated by Harold Rowe) – (30 minutes)
  - Concept overview of Storage as a Service - 10 min - Harold
  - Questions for discussion
    - What is our TCO to provide storage service internally?
    - Experiences of those who have migrated even on a pilot basis
    - Anyone considering implementing and why?
3. **IMA Funding Strategies** (Moderated by Mary Ann) – (30 minutes)
  - How has your district approached the new rules for IMA (Instructional Materials Allotment) funding? Who are the decision-makers ( the Curriculum Dept., Technology Dept., others)?
  - How many of you are hearing that all of the funding will be needed for textbook and related expenditures?
  - Is your district setting aside some of the IMA funding specifically for technology items?
  - Have any of you submitted technology items to TEA for payment? If yes, have you received any response?
  - Have any of you submitted a technology-related salary to TEA for payment?
4. **Using Social Media at Campus & District levels** (Moderated by Ed Zaiontz) – (25 minutes)
  - For the beginning of this discussion, let's assume that social media is defined by web sites such as Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, LinkedIn, and Twitter. Does your district block any of these social media sites? If so, which ones and why. If you do block access to these sites, do you allow access for any special groups?
  - What do you see as the challenges to providing access to these social media sites? Are these challenges different for students and staff? Do you have any policies in place that you think are particularly good, and if so, what makes them good?
  - For the second part of this discussion, let's broaden the definition of social media to include Web 2.0 tools such as wikis, blogs, and other online collaborative sites. Do you have specific policies (or practices) that promote the positive advantages of these sites and minimize any negative impacts?
5. **BYOD round table** (Moderated by Lenny Schad) – (45 minutes)
  - Level Setting question: How many of you have implemented "BYOD"?
  - Define BYOD
    - It is not about the device

- There has to be a higher purpose, ie: changing instruction, enhancing student engagement
  - Will BYOD by itself have an impact on the classroom
    - What other elements should be consider along with BYOD 4. What are the "Ya buts"
    - Questions from those considering, against and scared.
  - Gotchas
    - Lessons learned
    - Suggestions
  - So you have BYOD, what is next?
6. **Running IT in Tough Fiscal Times** (Moderated by Steve Young) – (25 Minutes)
- How have changes in funding, i.e. lack of Tech Allotment, state funding cuts, local budgets cuts, etc. affected how you operate IT in your district?
  - What have been your most effective budget stretching strategies and how has each been able to help your district out during this economic downturn?
  - Is the economy and budget permanently altering how our IT departments operate and serve our end users? How so?
  - Are there long term strategies that over the next 2-5 years, which can dramatically alter your IT spending and where you are allocating your dollars?
  - Does the change in budget affect how you will staff your department...i.e. do changing budget over the next few years mean that you may shift the type of talent you need in your IT department?
7. **CIO Influence** (Presented and Moderated by Sean Casey) – (15 minutes)
- <http://www.cioinsight.com/cp/bio/Marc-J.-Schiller/>
- 6 part series of articles on how CIOs can position themselves to be influential leaders in the organization.

**Summary:**

Your organization and senior leadership need you, the CIO, lead the discussion and provide guidance for your organization on many important decisions: designing solutions to organizational problems, identifying opportunities for technology to enable or drive improvements to process or outcomes, allocating budget & staffing, prioritizing projects or initiatives or even programs/departments, etc. According to Schiller, influence is the key attribute for a CIO to be successful.

**Discussion Questions and Prompts:**

1. What does a CIO need to be successful? (technical excellence & knowledge, business awareness and understanding, relationships, ambition? According to Schiller: Influence)
  - a. Potential tie to COSN CETL certification & framework of essential skills
  - b. Are there education-specific traits/strengths for a CIO of an ISD? (or local to your ISD)
2. Why do IT leaders struggle with alignment to the business/organization?
  - a. Prompt: "Our users don't get it. They expect us to work miracles and yet they barely get involved. You're challenged to keep up with the dizzying changes in information technology and how to best apply it to your organization's needs, all in an environment where you key stakeholders question your value every step of the way."

- b. Schiller: "Influence is what moves a CIO from a competent technical manager to an executive whose work and contributions are valued and who enjoys the respect of the senior leadership in the organization."
3. How do you build the influence necessary to succeed in your organization, whether big or small?
- a. Follow up: How do you create a new reality where the value and contribution of IT is understood and appreciated?
- b. Prompt: Start with credibility, not just subject matter credibility, but performance credibility.
4. Prompt: re-examining scarcity. According to Schiller, the absence of a big budget to do new projects has often proved to be the greatest catalyst for influence building for IT leaders. What is your ultimate scarce commodity even beyond budget?
- a. IMA. J Kidding. TIME.
- b. Connect to Chad's topic of continuing to manage and innovate in times of budget and staffing reductions. Strategies to discuss from the group?
5. According to Schiller, when you have no budget available, you are forced to ask the ultimate priority-setting question: where in the organization can I apply my efforts, energies and time to best leverage our existing investments and to make them really pay off for our enterprise? Make a time budget (in place of a financial budget) and allocate your time to areas and activities you think are most important.
- a. Schiller's suggestion: spend time side-by-side with users on systems they use that are not 100% of what they want or need, or that feel wrong to them. Evaluate with them to come up with:
- i. Quick hit wins easily implemented through minor configuration changes or targeted user training.
- ii. Long term issues that require significant budget but that have real, meaningful payback
- iii. Nice to have features that aren't valuable to pursue.
- b. Then, go for the quick hit wins. Work with the program to find the budget over time to meet the high impact goals, and manage expectations on the "nice to haves".
- c. End result: "A renewed focus on improving user experience, facilitate by the IT leadership directly, is just the sort of initiative that tells the user community that, even when budgets are tight, you care there to work on the things that are most important to them. This builds influence and credibility like you can't imagine."

The 6-part article series can be found here: <http://www.ciainsight.com/cp/bio/Marc-J.-Schiller/>

His site is here: <http://www.marcjschiller.com/>

I contacted Marc, and here is what he had to say.

*I'm delighted to hear you are putting the materials to use with your colleagues. Make sure to join my Insiders list to stay up to date on everything I publish. And if you haven't yet, order a copy of my book. If you place your order by phone with my office, (914 290-4575) use the discount code "EDUCATORS" and you will get free shipping and a 10% off.*