

## CIOOhio keynotes speak of a new era of innovation-driven business management

The 8th annual CIOOhio symposium, presented by HP ProCurve Networking and hosted by TechColumbus, was held earlier this month at the Hyatt Regency Downtown in Columbus. More than 270 high-level information technology executives and professionals attended the event entitled "Facing Challenge – Emerging Stronger Tomorrow."



In addition to the four compelling track sessions that provided opportunities for interactive dialogue on topics ranging from cloud computing to off-shore outsourcing, many attendees were drawn to the day-long event because of the high-profile diversity of backgrounds and disciplines represented by the symposium's three keynote speakers: Gary Hamel, acclaimed author, speaker and business thought leader; Steve Steinour, Chairman, President and CEO of Huntington Bancshares Inc. and Huntington National Bank; and Gerry McNamara, Managing Partner with Heidrick & Struggles.

Their subjects and presentations varied greatly. Yet one constant theme woven throughout each speaker's message was that innovation – either through new products, technology, delivery of services or management techniques – will be the driver of how well individuals and organizations will be able to compete in this information-based global environment.

"During tough economic times or not, the topic of innovation as a strategic weapon consistently rises to the top in discussions about competitiveness and future success," said Tim Haynes, TechColumbus Vice President of Member Services and Marketing. "This year was the most successful CIOOhio yet based on attendance and feedback

we've received about the content. What we continue to find is that the hunger for new ideas only continues to grow."

### Gerry McNamara

Gerry McNamara leads Heidrick & Struggles' CIO practice in America. The company is one of the world's leading executive search firms with more than 60 offices in 33 countries. McNamara's expertise is in understanding the needs of his clients and recruiting world-class technology and operations executives to help solve business problems.



McNamara focused his CIOOhio address on the nuts and bolts of the changing role of CIOs and what today's CEOs expect from them. Being a CIO is not just about running computers anymore. It has evolved to be much more focused on the business. "The CIO has gone from being a technical leader to a business leader who is a member of the executive team and can help the company 'move the needle,'" he said.

The overarching key to being a successful CIO, McNamara said, is demonstrating operational excellence. This means passing the day-to-day operations of the information technology infrastructure to your No. 2 person, concentrating on the big picture and being innovative. "If you don't have this, you won't have time to be part of strategic discussions with senior management."

Among qualities he emphasized were the ability to build relationships, communicate well and speak the language of business. "This has changed greatly. Partners in the company need to know what you're doing," he said. "They don't want acronyms and tech buzzwords; they want people who can speak in layman's terms and be strong communicators."

### Steve Steinour

As the new chairman, president and CEO of Huntington Steve Steinour brings more than 30 years of banking-related experience to the role, serving in past executive positions with a wide range of financial organizations such as the FDIC, Bank of New England, Citizens Financial Group, Royal Bank of Scotland Group and CrossHarbor Capital Partners.



Steinour shared his insights during the CIOOhio symposium on the current state of the financial industry and the changing role of IT in banking. One of the ways technology will flourish in the banking industry, he said, is through development of new products and services for online and mobile banking. These will be features that add efficiency. "The demand for consumer credit is down, but that's because people have less time for anything other than work," he said. "Young people want convenience and control that will involve new technology."

Security is another area wide open for new technology in banking, he said. "The fraudster world has mushroomed," he said.

### Gary Hamel

The Wall Street Journal recently ranked Gary Hamel as the world's most influential business thinker. Fortune magazine has called him "the world's leading expert on business strategy." He is the author of numerous books as well as articles published in the Harvard Financial Review, the Wall Street Journal, Fortune, the Financial Times and other leading publications. He is also a regular contributor to CNBC, CNN and other major media outlets.



Hamel proposed implementing new principles that work better in an era of constant change. "The distinguishing characteristic of our age is change," he said. "Management was created 100 years ago to turn human beings into robots – we don't need that anymore."

Hamel cited the Internet as the great driver of innovative change. "It is adaptable, innovative and engaging. People spend more time there than with any other media." In this environment, CIOs have a competitive edge, Hamel

said. "CIOs are the ones who know this technology better than anyone else," and they are the ones who should lead the effort to embrace management principles that encourage innovation, he added.

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### What is the CEO looking for in the CIO?

Gerry McNamara says today's CIOs need to possess a diverse skill set that fosters innovation and helps position the organization for competitive advantage.

- Dependable leader
- Strong communicator
- Ability to raise level of IT understanding across the business
- Deliver on commitments
- Speak the language of the business
- Relationship builder