

# Change agent



As global CIO at Dell, Adriana Karaboutis is leading the evolution of

Dell's IT organization—from developing an agile and efficient global information infrastructure to championing imaginative ways to spark innovation. Karaboutis is keenly focused on how her IT organization can be a catalyst for Dell's overall transformation.

**Q:** *How has Dell IT evolved to support the company's business transformation?*

**A:** Dell has been extremely successful as a product-centric company for the last 28 years. Now, Dell has expanded to become an end-to-end technology solutions provider. To support this business model, Dell IT strengthened its focus on

# Q+A

Adriana Karaboutis  
Global CIO at Dell

innovation, value delivery, and operational excellence. As part of our Dell-on-Dell mantra, we successfully implemented an IT-as-a-service model and outsourced IT development and infrastructure support to Dell Services. We also restructured how we allocate our budget, looking for ways to run our business as efficiently as possible and to increase our investment in new capabilities—while still maintaining our

compliance, security, and audit requirements.

**Q:** *How has IT's relationship with the business changed?*

**A:** The lines between IT and the business have blurred. Over the past three years, Dell has progressed from bottoms-up, business unit-centric IT funding to an integrated and aligned delivery process for meeting strategic priorities.

Dell IT has worked closely with the business to design and deliver capabilities required to support Dell's transformational strategy. At the core of that shift has been the development of a blueprint for the future-state business architecture. The Business Architecture Team, or BAT, creates the blueprint for aligning processes, systems, and people to enable and support Dell's transformation

while addressing current-state pain points. The future-state blueprint is designed to be a living document that evolves with Dell's strategy.

One early outcome of the blueprint development process was the realization that our sales systems required expansion to support complex product offerings in addition to our standard hardware business. We needed to

enable transactions that could comprise many different elements, such as software, hardware, and recurring X-as-a-service products or subscriptions. Having a cross-functional team of Dell business and IT leaders allowed us to quickly understand the capabilities needed and start planning a solution.

**Q:** *How did Dell IT initiate the transformation?*

**A:** We started by taking a close look at Dell's process capabilities: develop, market, sell, fulfill, and support. A combined team of business and IT leaders worked together to create an end-to-end capability assessment and define the target future state within and across these process capabilities. Inputs include outside-in research, external benchmarking, emerging

trends, Dell's future business plans, and internal discussion with business leaders.

At the same time, IT is creating its first strategic plan that both supports Dell's business and establishes IT as an innovation organization. Not only is IT supporting the new business model, it is also incubating fresh ideas around bring your own device (BYOD), cloud, and consumerization.

**Q:** *Can you share the policies or tools that IT put in place to help boost employee productivity?*

**A:** Dell IT now has a team dedicated to developing our internal mobility, BYOD, and consumerization strategy and replicating the at-home experience for our team members. Employees are looking for ways to apply technology originally designed for the consumer market

to business tasks. While we've made some great progress already, we want to implement a strategy that allows our team members to use the tools and devices of their choice to securely connect to the Dell network. Our goal is to improve end-user productivity and satisfaction.

To explore key workforce trends, Dell and Intel recently

commissioned a study that included a survey of 8,360 workers across 11 countries.<sup>1</sup> This survey indicated that 83 percent of respondents believe that technology advances have enabled them to be more productive. In addition, 70 percent of respondents indicated that they are attracted to work for companies that offer the best technology and a degree of choice in tools.

At Dell, over 10,000 team members are already participating in our BYOD program related to smartphones.

Thousands of team members also take part in our Connected Workplace program, which allows people to work from the location of their choice. Additionally, through the effective use of social media and unified communications tools,

we're able to connect team members around the globe to create a very collaborative environment without high travel costs. It really boils down to giving our team access to information and data—along with the ability to manipulate it so they can get more done—while still effectively managing IT costs.

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<sup>1</sup>Survey findings based on research conducted by TNS Global for the Evolving Workforce research program commissioned by Dell and Intel in December 2011.