

Information Technology

“Whither thou goest, I will go...”

In the Biblical story of Ruth, Ruth, newly widowed, tells Naomi, her mother in law, that she will go with Naomi wherever she goes and that Naomi's people will be her people.

Would that our friends, employees and customers were this faithful!

Whatever direction you set for your organization, you want your computer systems to support it, to go faithfully where the organization goes. The constant theme of this column has been how to use technology to help you meet your business and organizational objectives. As a computer consultant, I am often surprised (and somewhat disappointed) at how many small and mid size businesses use computer technology only for routine tasks like word processing and bookkeeping. Why aren't more organizations taking advantage of products and technologies that can help grow their businesses, deliver better products, or improve customer service?

Maybe the dizzying pace of technology confuses or dazes us into inaction. It's easier to stay with the familiar, the known, even if there's something better available.

Maybe there are so many choices it's impossible to complete an analysis before yet another choice or new technology appears on the horizon. This causes “analysis paralysis”, where we're stuck in the analysis process, unable to reach a decision.

Or maybe the prospect of training people in new ways of doing things is daunting.

Whatever the perceived obstacle, the turn of the year, decade, century and millennium is a good time to look at the way we manage business processes and deliver services to customers. What prevents us from meeting our goals? What do we need to do to provide better products and services to our clients and customers? Can technology help?

Effective solutions require effective, not necessarily high, technology. Often a low-tech solution like computer-based faxing, contact management, or using a scanner to automate document flow will provide substantial benefits for a modest investment. Once the organization's direction is set, we need to make sure we set a technology direction that faithfully goes where the organization goes.

This column by Denis Williamson of MacLamor Computer Consulting aims to help readers maximize the value of information technology. You can reach Denis at 845-357-1877 or denis@maclamor.com