



Tech Trends in 2008 Will Be "Virtually" Simple!

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By [Bill Carlino, Editor-in-Chief, Accounting Today](#)

Simplicity and virtualization will be two emerging trends over the coming year as technology providers focus on intelligent design rather than previous business models of one size fits all.

"The features wars are over and most of us lost," said noted technology consultant Randy Johnston of Network Management Group and K2 Enterprises. "The newer applications will be simpler with fewer features."

Johnston updated attendees on current technology trends during a morning keynote on the opening day of the AICPA Information Technology Conference here.

"The average life of a server is five years," Johnston explained. "Now there are virtual PCs and fully functional desktops delivered across the networks." Johnston explained that virtualization reduces power usage and demonstrated that operating 25 desktops at an average of 14 cents a kilowatt-hour can run into the thousands of dollars.

Extending the virtualization concept to the firm level, he reported that several CPA firms have re-created their firms in virtual form within Second Life, while last year the Maryland Society of CPAs created "CPA Island."

He advised conference attendees that their IT projects should be separated into two categories - technologies that should be completed and those that are in process.

To remain current, implemented technologies should be projects such as VoIP, remote access, broadband cellular and paperless. Those that should be in process include virtualization, business analytics, search engine optimization and portals.

In a vendor update, Johnston noted that sales of Vista remain sluggish with the installed XP base, and that its successor, Windows 7 (a placeholder name), is scheduled to ship in November 2009.

Meanwhile, Office 14, the next generation of Office 2007, is slated for a February 2009 ship date. Office 14 will feature more collaboration and sharing capabilities.

Other tech trends for 2008 and beyond include cell phones with video projection capabilities, carbon nanotubes that will eventually replace silicon chips, a new wave of ultra mobile PCs, and mobile wireless devices with external display controls.

"Your next laptop may well be your cell phone," said Johnston.