



Winning the 3-Legged Race : When Business and Technology Run Together

By Faisal Hoque, V. Sambamurthy, Robert Zmud, Tom Trainer, Carl Wilson

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Like an old-fashioned three-legged race, the business and technology sides of any company are running today with the left leg of one tied to the right leg of the other. Some companies understand that and run well; some don't. The top executives interviewed in this book (see overflow page for a partial list) know where competitive leaders are headed.

***Winning the Three Legged Race* is the first major output of the new Business Technology Management (BTM) Institute, reflecting insights from world-class experts in industry and academia. It gives enterprise, line-of-business, and IT leaders a powerful framework for optimizing areas critical to producing sustainable value from technology:**

1. Strategy, planning, and management.
2. Technology investment.
3. Strategic enterprise architecture.
4. Governance and organization.

For each area, the authors identify implications for ordered processes, organizational structures, information requirements, and technology. Winning the Three Legged Race introduces the BTM Maturity Model: a breakthrough benchmark for setting priorities and mapping effective change paths. The authors support their framework with up-to-the-minute data, new case studies, executive interviews, and Top 10 Action Lists that empower decision-makers to act--and get results.

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- Sales Rank: #1446316 in Books
- Published on: 2005-11-18
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.10" h x 1.00" w x 6.20" l, 1.17 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 256 pages

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By Faisal Hoque

Chairman and CEO Enamics, Inc.

Founder and Chair BTM Institute

STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT

Our Journey So Far

As meetings go, it was inconspicuous: A dozen university professors and business executives had gathered in a hotel conference room in Washington, D.C., in December 2004, to discuss their field, managing business and technology together. What was set in motion that day, however, will have far-reaching significance.

It was a year after the founding of the BTM Institute, and these members were meeting to set a three-year research agenda for the emerging management science of Business Technology Management (BTM). The institute had published several management papers on various particulars of BTM, but now those in attendance decided to publish a book. It would be the next step in gathering what we know about managing business technology and pointing to areas for future research.

Although based on research, the book also had to be practical. And so it was agreed that it would contain explicit advice for practitioners on the job and perspectives from executives around the world.

The result is *Winning The 3-Legged Race*.

In the perennial picnic game, teams of two tie the left leg of one partner to the right leg of the other. They must quickly learn to coordinate their movements so that the tied legs stride forward in unison, then the untied legs, then the tied legs. The thesis of this book is that business executives and technology executives must similarly learn to run together. Otherwise, they are likely to lose the race to their competitors.

As a starting point for planning this book, the Institute's Global Research Council used the Business Technology Management Framework created by Enamics, Inc., a company I launched in 1999. The Enamics BTM FrameworkTM is a comprehensive, holistic approach to managing business and technology. We present it in detail in Chapter 1, "What Is BTM?"

The book is organized into two main sections. Part I, "Preparing to Run," addresses BTM at the most strategic levels, where the board, the CEO, and the entire leadership team must be intensely involved if a company expects to be successful. Part II, "Leading the Pack," delves deeper into specific issues of actually getting business and technology to run together according to strategy.

To the chapters we have added the perspectives of executives and academics around the world. We interviewed them in Paris, Amsterdam, New York, and other cities. Their contributions are labeled "Leadership Insights" and "Research Insights."

The names of these thought leaders are on the back cover. If you were to add up the years these accomplished people have devoted to studying, teaching, and practicing the management of technology, it would be many, many times greater than the 50 or so years we've had information technology.

Each chapter begins with a summary that places the subject in context. An "In Brief" section summarizes the chapter at a high level. Each chapter concludes with an "Executive Agenda," where the chapter's subject is

translated into specific action steps. You can use these chapter elements, along with the subheads and callouts, to get a quick overview of the subject matter.

In the introduction and conclusion, two prominent CIOs reflect on the need for a standard for business technology management, much as other fields such as finance have standards of practice. This is the goal toward which the BTM Institute is working. Surely at this stage in the field's evolution, we can agree on what works and what does not. The power of this technology is so great, the change it is forcing, not only in business but in every other human endeavor as well, is so sweeping, that now is the time to settle on how best to use it.

The first of many steps leading to this book came in the summer of 1999, when I was working on my first book, *e-Enterprise: Business Models, Architecture, and Components*. A fundamental argument in it was that technology is meaningless if you do not know how to manage it. This realization came from working for large corporations, as well as from being an entrepreneur and having these corporations as customers. This was a genuine and unmet need, one I wanted to address. I couldn't imagine then how far that desire would lead.

What I had witnessed in company after company was how haphazardly people managed technology, particularly technology spending. The business principles they applied in other areas were not being applied to technology. They would not think of building a new plant without understanding exactly how it would benefit the business. But technology? In many firms, it was bought and deployed on a hope and a prayer. This was the era of dot.com exuberance, of course, and there was a madness loose in the land, but I had seen this problem in earlier, quieter years.

People were looking at pieces of a solution—the concept of portfolio management was getting attention, for example, as were various methods for measuring the ROI in information technology. But no one was looking at the problem holistically. The term alignment was growing in prominence, but not many firms knew how to get there. One or two management enthusiasms of the month would not be the answer.

I became convinced that business executives and technology executives still viewed each other across a chasm, even if they were now sitting at the same table. Only when they took off their business or technology hats and worked together to build the business could they succeed.

How would they do that? They needed a set of ideas, a framework of concrete practices and procedures that would turn the amorphous concept of alignment into reality. I started Enamics, and we began to research and develop this framework. We called it the Business Technology Management Framework. After several years, we took on a limited number of customers to test it in practice—if it had no commercial value, it would be nothing more than a nice theory. As it turned out, the framework was greeted with enthusiasm by executives wrestling with real-world problems.

The framework was a fundamentally different proposition for them. Every management team has pretty much been creating its own approach and practices. Sometimes they worked, and sometimes they did not. Now, with the BTM Framework, the management of technology had a chance to become a science that would replace trial and error. BTM aims to unify decision making from the boardroom to the IT project team. BTM provides a structured approach to such decisions that lets enterprises align, synchronize, and even converge business technology and business management, thus ensuring better execution, risk control, and profitability.

Three years after the formation of Enamics, we published a book on BTM, *The Alignment Effect*. This began to attract attention among university professors who were teaching the management of technology. Today, more than a dozen universities use the book in their courses.

Enthusiasm among professors and industry practitioners was strong enough that, in 2003, we created the BTM Institute, a nonprofit organization that could pull together the work of many academics, provide feedback from executive practitioners, and develop a research agenda to create a standard for BTM—much like Carnegie Mellon's Capability Maturity Model, which is a standard for process improvement. This book is the institute's first major publication.

The institute has become a global community, with members in Asia, Africa, Europe, and the United States. Technology has so infiltrated our world, changing societies and economies, that the need for managing it intelligently has become a global concern.

I returned to Washington recently to meet with Harriet Mayor Fulbright, chairperson of The Fulbright Center, which has a rich legacy of international educational exchanges and a worldwide community of scholars and alumni. She has joined us in promoting the education of a new generation of leaders in Business Technology Management.

A few weeks before, I had spent time in Sweden with Dr. Michael Nobel, chairman of the Nobel Family Society. The family has long been associated with innovations that not only have commercial value but also promote human welfare. He has joined us, too, seeing in BTM a transforming potential rivaling any other field of science.

The interest of these two distinguished people was unimaginable when we started, and it is unprecedented. What they could see, I'll confess I didn't when I started this quest: Technology informs and influences and improves every aspect of our lives.

Our hope is that this is the beginning of a revolution in the management of business and technology together across the globe, and that what we are learning will not only benefit us all today but influence leaders of the future, as well.

We have created wonderful technology. Now we must understand how to use it.

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