

News Release

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INFORMATION SECURITY TOP TECH ISSUE FOR 2005, ACCORDING TO ANNUAL AICPA SURVEY

NEW YORK (January 3, 2005) – For the third consecutive year, Information Security is the country’s number one technology concern, according to the results of the 2005 Top Technologies survey of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

The survey, conducted annually since 1990, seeks to determine the 10 most important technology issues for the coming year. There were more than 300 participants in the 2005 survey, a 30 percent increase over the previous year.

Interestingly, Spam Technology – an issue closely associated with Information Security – apparently has lost some currency. It made its debut on the 2004 list at number two. On the new list, it falls to number four.

“Because our work and personal lives are now inextricably linked to information systems, security will always be top of mind,” said Roman Kepczyk, CPA/CITP, Chair of the AICPA’s Information Technology Executive Committee. Commenting on Spam Technology’s lower placement on the list, he said, “We’ve seen major improvements to filtering systems, which have allowed us to bring Spam under greater control. This most likely is the reason that Spam Technology doesn’t command the importance it did in the previous survey.”

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A different issue closely allied with Information Security – Electronic Data Management, or the Paperless Office – moved up to second place. It was number three last year.

There are two debuts on the Top Technologies list: Authentication Technologies and Storage Technologies. Another issue, Learning and Training Competency, reappears at number 10 after an absence of three years.

The following are the 2005 Top 10 Technologies (new issues are indicated):

1. **Information Security:** The hardware, software, processes and procedures in place to protect an organization's information systems from internal and external threats.
2. **Electronic Document Management (paperless or less-paper office):** The process of capturing, indexing, storing, retrieving, searching and managing documents electronically. Formats include PDF, digital and image store database technologies.
3. **Data Integration:** The ability to update one field and have it automatically synchronize between multiple databases, such as the automatic/seamless transfer of client information between all systems. In this instance, only the data flows across systems from platform to platform or application to application. Data integration also involves the application-neutral exchange of information. For example, the increased use of XBRL (eXtensible Business Reporting Language) by companies worldwide provides for the seamless exchange and aggregation of financial data to meet the needs of different user groups using different applications to read, present and analyze data.
4. **Spam Technology:** The use of technology to reduce or eliminate unwanted e-mail commonly known as Spam.
5. **Disaster Recovery:** The development, monitoring and updating of the process by which organizations plan for continuity of their business in the event of a loss of business information resources through theft, virus/malware infestation, weather damage, accidents or other malicious destruction. Disaster recovery includes business continuation, contingency planning and disk recovery technologies and processes.
6. **Collaboration and Messaging Applications:** Applications that allow users to communicate electronically, including e-mail, voicemail, universal messaging, instant messaging, e-mailed voice messages and digital faxing. Examples include a computer conference using the keyboard (a keyboard chat) over the Internet between two or more people.

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7. **Wireless Technologies:** The transfer of voice or data from one machine to another via the airwaves and without physical connectivity. Examples include cellular, satellite, infrared, Bluetooth, WiFi, 3G, 2-way paging, CDMA, Wireless/WiMax and others.
8. **Authentication Technologies (new):** The hardware, software, processes and procedures to protect a person's privacy and identity from internal and external threats, including digital identity, privacy and biometric authentication.
9. **Storage Technologies (new):** Storage area networks (SAN) include mass storage, CD-recordable, DVD, data compression, near field recording, electronic document storage and network attached storage (NAS), as well as small personal storage devices like USB drives.
10. **Learning and Training Competency (End Users):** The methodology and curriculum by which personnel learn to understand and use technology. This includes measuring competency, learning plans to increase the knowledge of individuals, and hiring and retaining qualified personnel with career opportunities that retain the stars.

2005 Emerging Technologies

Each year, the AICPA Top Technologies Task Force prepares a "watch list" of five emerging technologies that may not have viable commercial acceptance currently, but show promise in the next 24-36 months as having a potential impact on businesses and individuals.

1. **RFID (Radio Frequency Identification):** Silicon chips and an antenna that transmits data to a wireless receiver could one day be used to track everything from soda cans to cereal boxes. Unlike bar codes that need to be scanned manually and read individually (you have to actually *see* a bar code in order to read it), RFID tags do not require line-of-sight for reading. Within the field of a wireless reading device, it is possible to automatically read hundreds of tags a second.
2. **Search:** Companies like Google, Apple Computer and Microsoft are putting research and development resources into new ways of pinpointing digital files that do not require wading through directories of folders.
3. **Fuel Cells:** Methanol-powered fuel cells represent an exciting alternative to aging battery technology that will help users complete the "everything wireless" puzzle. These electromechanical devices represent both an environmentally friendly solution (they give off carbon dioxide and water as their by-product), as well as provide unlimited life for mobile devices (just fill the tank when they run low on fuel!).

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4. **Digital Home:** The line between “digital home” and the office work-day continues to blur. For example, “non-desktop PC” technology is making a difference in how we work at the office and live at home: 802.11 cameras monitor the office after hours or home during the day (security system), while a 42" plasma screen resides in the office conference room, as well as the living room.

5. **Display Technology:** The continued evolution of various display technologies allow for higher resolutions and smaller devices with lower power consumptions. Display technology is also merging, so that instead of having dedicated functions, such as a television receiver and a computer monitor, one display device is serving multiple functions.

For further information, please visit <http://www.aicpa.org/infotech/technologies/toptechs.htm>.

The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (www.aicpa.org) is the national, professional organization of CPAs, with more than 340,000 members in business and industry, public practice, government, and education. It sets ethical standards for the profession and U.S. private auditing standards. It also develops and grades the Uniform CPA Examination.

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