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### Day & Zimmermann CIO Anthony Bosco on Vision Strate

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By Pam Baker  
May 5, 2005 11:35AM

"There has been a high degree of automation over years, which has brought a great degree of agility, connectivity," Day & Zimmermann CIO Anthony Bosco says today. "That's the equivalent of a dial tone on the phone. You have to have it but it's what you do with it that counts."

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As the Vice President and CIO of [Day & Zimmermann](#), Anthony Bosco, Jr. is responsible for the global company's information technology organization and optimizing the company's enterprise resource planning (ERP) system.

Operating from more than 150 worldwide locations and with annual revenue of over \$1 billion, the Day & Zimmermann family of companies employs 20,000 professionals and is currently ranked as one of the largest private companies in America by Fortune magazine.

The business units of Day & Zimmermann offer several services: recruitment and staffing; power-plant maintenance and modifications; [security](#) services; research and development; defense operations and maintenance; engineering and construction management; pharmaceutical and biotech quality control. Combined, these businesses serve over 100,000 customers and more than 60 percent of Fortune 100 companies.

Bosco's most recent technology initiative is the Yoh Exchange, a collaborative portal that integrates Yoh's staffing services with a customers' hiring logist automating the recruiting and management of company personnel. Yoh Exchange parent company \$135 million in 2004 sales.

For 25 years, Bosco has been employed by Day & Zimmermann, progressing through staff and line roles in all areas of the company. He holds bachelor's degrees in Accounting and Computer Science from La Salle University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Bosco spoke exclusively with CIO Today about the challenges I.T. leaders face in today's business climate. Articulate and energized, he is an open and engaging personality.

**CIO Today: What are your top concerns as CIO?**

**Bosco:** I wouldn't call them concerns, so much as challenges. There has been a great degree of automation over the past ten years, which has brought a great deal of agility, speed and connectivity.

That's the equivalent of a dial tone on the phone; you have to have it but it's not what you do with it that counts. The real issue is to solve real business problems and foster collaborations inside and outside the company. I see myself as more of a business operations guy than a technologist.

Not so long ago, people were wowed by the idea that a package could be shipped overnight to anywhere in the world. Now it is considered mundane. It is the evolution of the CIO. You don't wow; you produce consistently and with little fanfare.

**CIO Today: Has the I.T. environment changed from five years ago?**

**Bosco:** It has changed substantially with the advent of the Internet. Business is now conducted 24/7; there are no such things as business hours anymore. Customers come when they want to, not just when your store is open.

Prospective employees apply when they want to. Management reviews candidates on their convenience. All our stakeholders -- and we define that word very broadly -- include customers, suppliers, subvendors, employees, management, prospective employees, etc. -- want the convenience of immediate access at any hour.

But because most of our stakeholders are not tech people; our technology is agile, accessible and easy-to-use.

**CIO Today: How have new legislative demands affected the I.T. department and the company in particular?**

**Bosco:** We are a privately held company, so we are not as tied up in legislative requirements like Sarbox. Those type issues are important to us only as it affects our customers' needs and perspectives.

There are some regulations pertaining to privacy issues on both the federal and state -- primarily California -- levels that we have to adhere to; but we would have had individual privacy anyway.

Privately-held companies have the luxury of putting more dollars toward technology investments since we have fewer commitments to compliance issues. We still deal with the day-to-day issues, and we do hold to the 80/20 rule, but we can adapt and create since we are not forced to constantly react to the regulations that publicly-held companies face.

**CIO Today: Which enterprise component or technology will be growing most in terms of your company's budget pie in the next 12 months?**

**Bosco:** Portal strategies, the Yahoo Exchange business process integration, supplier relations management -- we will be deploying more and more of that -- primarily a SAP shop; we threw out legacy systems long ago.

But just because we are an all SAP shop, doesn't mean slices of the various integrate. So, we will be working to customize the software more to suit out through a different integration setup. We also have some non-SAP apps that are integrated as well.

The industry is moving away from the modular approach and towards a seamless approach that is more natural for human use; but completely unlike the CRM software industry's initial designs.

**CIO Today: Can you walk us through the decision-making process of implementing a business process management initiative?**

**Bosco:** Since we are a privately-held company, we have a pretty flat organization. We first determine if there is a business pain. If there is pain, then that's a pretty good indication that something is needed.

We also refer to our vision strategy to make sure our tech considerations are in alignment with our plan. Once a business case is established, then we do our cost calculations.

The CFO team then scrutinizes our calculations. Soft returns are not considered a part of the process at all --- if those do exist, we consider them icing on the cake. Our goal is to determine all costs and measurable, hard returns.

Once past all of that, we work to understand the phasing process. If it takes too long to go live, the business will have changed and the technology may become irrelevant by the time we ever use it. We have also learned that if you fail to define attainable milestones throughout the process, phasing can go on forever. We need to have impact as fast as possible.

As an example: One year the ASP company we were using went bankrupt. We had our business case done in a few weeks, finished it in August. It was approved in September, the full upgrade done by January, and we went live with a new system on the Yoh Exchange, by July. That is how fast we move. Speed, to us, is of the essence.

**CIO Today: What are one or two software or hardware products your company uses that you would describe as "outstanding?"**

**Bosco:** SAP is definitely outstanding. We think SAP is a good three to four years ahead of their competition. Their CRM product and portal technology is especially excellent.

**CIO Today: Which emerging technology do you see as most important to the enterprise?**

**Bosco:** I'm not sure we have emerging technology now; it's more a matter of maximizing what's currently available.

I would say sales force automation is pseudo-there; but it's not far away. Integrating mobile technology to work with enterprise services is finally in vogue. There is a huge need for that.

But really, there's not so much that is truly new.

**CIO Today: Where do you go to do your research on new technologies?**

**Bosco:** Actually, to CIO Today and other such publications. I like to read to see what my colleagues are doing and to learn from their experiences.

We are also involved in trade organizations for the same reason; we are more interested in what end-users think than in vendor or manufacturer hype. We do use surveys but there is so much out there, you have to be careful with that.

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