

Summary and Recommendation

The high demand in both the private and public sector for Web based transaction processing and EIS usage creates the need for a more organized and structured way of developing Web based applications. This holds true for "new" non-legacy laden developments of WApps, but even more for WApps that have to integrate with NLS. In order to benefit from the lessons learned, this generally calls for an object oriented, holistic approach to these developments that takes the longevity of applications and the inherent budgetary and technological risk into account. Otherwise an organization might find itself in the unpleasant position of being prisoner to its past with reduced options for its future. When building and reformulating corporate strategies that boil down to organizational processes and structures with all its financial implication, the technology side of the whole picture has to be well understood in terms of its overall impact. This impact can be quite significant as the "Y2K" problem shows. There are estimates that up to 70 percent of 1999's IT budgets are just spent on fixes in this respect.

Since WApps appear at a time when more powerful development and maintenance tools and architectures are available than in the past, the proponents of these technologies should be contacted and invited for an ongoing dialogue. These are the companies of Bluestone Software, Inc., Net Dynamics, Inc., and Apple Enterprise Systems. The companies shall be asked to present their understanding of the situation, their stance regarding the issues, and their answers in terms of products and services. This might then lead to one or more evaluation projects and benchmarking of live sites in the private sector. It will enable the Center for Technology in Government to thoroughly and competently advise state agencies on the subject in the most relevant aspects of the matter. It will help the vendors to get into direct contact with the governmental sector.
