

The Epitec Factor

Perspective from the Top



The Information Technology (IT) staffing industry is a 68 billion dollar industry, and according to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, IT is the fastest growing sector in the U.S. economy with a 68 percent increase in growth projected between 2002 and 2012.

With such a lucrative and competitive market it's even more important to focus on what differentiates our company from the more than 600 other firms out there. And more importantly, why companies choose Epitec for their IT solutions.

Client Base: Epitec has an excellent client base. With a client roster that includes Ford, DaimlerChrysler, the City of Detroit, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, AAA of Michigan, Comerica Bank, Borders, Wayne County and CareTech Solutions, it's hard to find another

Mission: To be a valued resource to our customers. To build a company that will last by being a healthy and profitable organization that continues to grow and is committed to enhancing shareholder equity.

Vision: To be a premier Information Technology organization that people want to work for and companies want to do business with. We want to be known as a company that is employee-focused, customer-driven and process-oriented.

company with a client portfolio as strong or as diverse. Client delivery and satisfaction are part of our core, and our clients have come to expect superior service from all facets of our organization.

Employees: Another major factor separating us from our competition is Epitec's focus on employees. Employees are one of our top priorities. Our employees' determination and exceptional skills have generated a company-wide project completion rate of 96 percent; meaning 96 percent of the people assigned to a project at the start are there at the completion of the assignment. Having good people is where customer value is truly generated, and we reward our employees for their hard work. The benefits and compensation packages we offer are competitive. We work to maintain employee benefits even during rough economic times. We provide training and tuition reimbursement for continual promotion of education and knowledge sharing within the organization, and the Employee Care and Support Portal we've established is designed to give employees access to address any issues or challenges 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

Relationships: Relationships are another key to any successful partnership, and we build relationships at every level within our customers' organizations. Epitec has become top of mind when clients such as DaimlerChrysler or the City of Detroit are looking for a company to transition employees from a desourced vendor.

These key factors and nearly 30 years of industry experience truly differentiate us from our competitors. By continuing to learn and focusing on these core areas we will continue to be a leader in this industry for another 30 years.

A Plasma TV or Diamond Necklace

Which would you choose?

A recent survey of 1,400 women and 700 men shows that three quarters of women and men would choose a plasma television over a diamond necklace any day of the week. The survey was conducted by the research firm TRU, and commissioned by the Oxygen Network. The survey also found that on average, women are becoming more comfortable with the majority of new technologies on the market and are purchasing and using technologies on a daily basis.

Some other interesting stats included:

- On average, women own 6.6 technology-driven devices, while men have 6.9.
- 80 percent of women feel comfortable with new technologies.
- Nearly half of the 1,400 women surveyed perform their own computer troubleshooting procedures.
- 77 percent of females queried would rather have a new plasma TV than a diamond solitaire necklace.
- More than half of the female respondents would pick a plasma TV over a two-day vacation in Florida.
- 86 percent of the women surveyed said they'd pick a new digital camera over a new pair of designer shoes.

It seems diamonds are no longer a "girl's best friend."

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Vista and Office '07 Coming to a Computer Near You

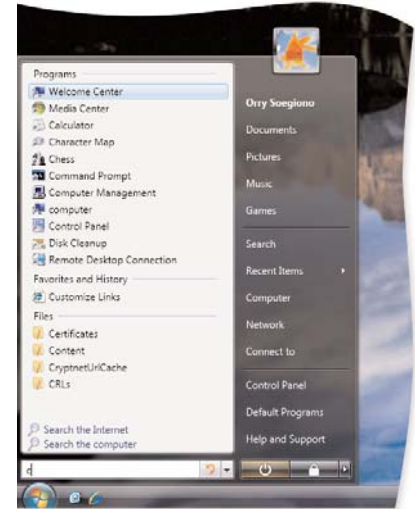
It's 2006 and how up-to-date is your computer? Like the rest of us, you are probably running Windows 98 on your home PC, using the almost extinct Office 2000 suite at work and just scraping by on the latest Microsoft updates to keep your machine and business current. Well, just when you thought you were getting up to speed, technology behemoth Microsoft is launching its new Windows Vista operating system (OS) and the latest edition of Microsoft Office. This marks a significant advancement in the computer OS and software industry.

Windows Vista

Vista will be Microsoft's first desktop OS since the successful launch of Windows XP in October of 2001. Engineers behind Vista took Windows XP, polished it off and then gave it Major League Baseball steroids. The new Windows Vista will deliver great value to businesses by seamlessly connecting people to information, enabling increased mobile and remote productivity, reducing desktop complexity, significantly reducing deployment and support costs and providing a more secure and compliant platform. Vista is situated around four pillars as:

- Find and use information quickly
- Enable mobile workforces
- Improve security and compliance
- Optimize desktop infrastructure

Here are some exciting features of Windows Vista:



- Refined start menu that instantly finds and starts any program. The "All Programs" view eliminates the cascading menus from previous Windows versions.
- New explorers contain integrated desktop searches and Live Icons. Live Icons provide a preview of actual contents in a specific file including documents, photos and graphics without actually opening the file.

- Details and Preview Panes let users see what a file contains without opening it. The Preview Pane, similar to Live Icons, provides a clear preview of documents, spreadsheets, and presentations.
- Taskbar thumbnails show content contained in minimized taskbar windows creating mini-previews for each window.
- Windows Flip 3D creates a view of open windows in a three-dimensional stack on your desktop. By using a mouse or keyboard, users can flip through open windows to quickly locate and select the desired window.
- Search menus are built into every window for internal PC and Web searches. An estimated \$9,000 to \$14,000 in productivity is lost per worker per year as people try to find or re-create misplaced information and documents.



- Sidebar gadgets provide quick shortcuts to tools like picture slide shows, Windows Media Player controls, or news headlines.

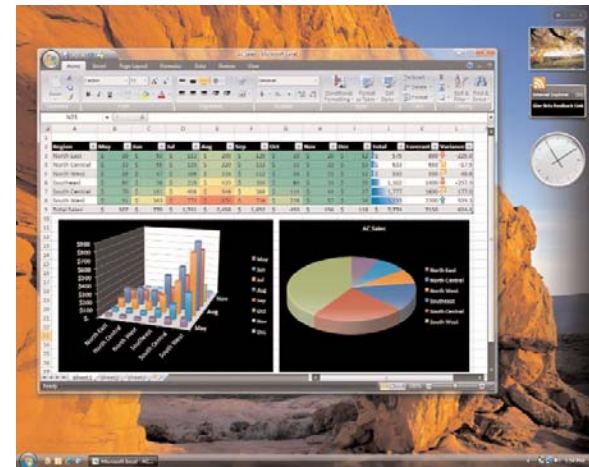
Microsoft Office 2007

Microsoft Office is one of the most widely used word processing, data management and presentation development software programs on the market. The newest version of Office will offer different packages ranging from Small Business to Professional depending on the user's needs. Also, Office 2007 will allow users to create and share documents, spreadsheets, and presentations in Portable Document Format (PDF) and XML Paper Specification (XPS) format without additional third-party tools like Adobe Photoshop. Here are a few of the snazzy features:

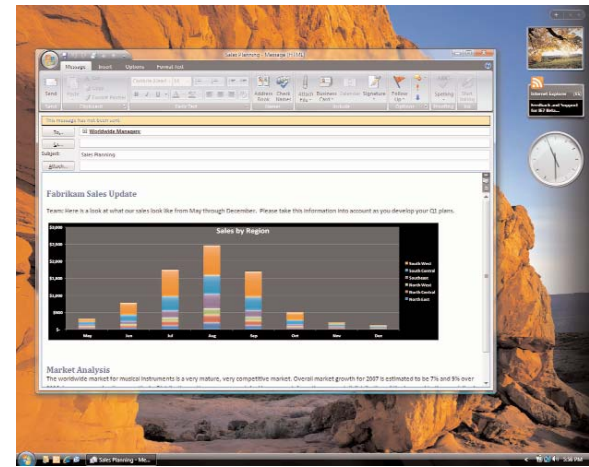
Word: New review and tracking features allow document owners to keep track of a document's history through multiple edits. A font feature is incorporated into Word so users can quickly see what the entire document will look like in a certain font.



Excel: Colorful charts can be created within the spreadsheet faded behind the data. Excel 2007 makes sophisticated data analysis available through easier access to corporate data sources, redesigned interfaces for PivotTable views and easier-to-use conditional formatting.



Outlook: Outlook 2007 helps users effectively manage time and commitments through new tools such as the To-Do Bar. These tools provide a consolidated view of tasks and upcoming appointments. Better integration between e-mails, tasks and calendars enable drag-and-drop allocation of time for working on tasks and a variety of other tools.



Prices for both of these programs are still being finalized but should be in the same ballpark as previous Microsoft applications. More information on Vista can be found by visiting www.microsoft.com/windowsvista or Office 2007 at www.microsoft.com/office/preview/default.aspx.

Zoo Fun 4 Everyone



On a beautiful Saturday afternoon during the second week of August, Epitac held its annual employee family picnic. This year's picnic was held at the Detroit Zoo. More than 280 Epitac employees and their friends and families attended the festivities with great food, lots of sun and temperatures in the low 80s. The afternoon went off without a hitch.

The Detroit Zoo is a great place to learn about and see exotic animals up close and personal. Remember the Detroit Zoo is a non-profit organization and we need to continue to support it through our donations and attendance. The Zoo caters to thousands of children and adults every year, so let's keep the Zoo alive for years to come.

Certification Program Update

In our last issue of Epitalk we mentioned that we were starting a certification preparatory program to help employees expand their knowledge base and gain additional technical certifications. The first of these programs started on August 1 focusing on Project Management Institute (PMI) certification.

We had 63 respondents interested in participating in the program which we narrowed down to a dozen individuals. The class was taught by our very own Ed Speck, who is currently working on a project for General Motors. The group met twice a week for six weeks, totaling 36 classroom hours. The PMI program will eventually lead to Product Management Professional credential certification.

Possibilities for the next certification class include Cisco training or other networking protocol. Please continue to share your thoughts for possible programs. These programs will continue to grow and expand our skills into new development areas.

Please send any questions or comments to support@epitacgroup.com. Your input may become a topic in future issues of Epitalk.

Industry Insight

Matt Roush, Great Lakes IT Report and WWJ



Matt Roush joined WWJ Newsradio 950 in August 2001 to launch the *Great Lakes IT Report* (GLITR), an IT newsletter delivered via e-mail every business morning. As editor and technology reporter of GLITR and WWJ, Roush covers the tech world broadly, including hardware, software, advanced manufacturing, life sciences, and tech education. In 1994, while covering retailing for *Crain's Detroit Business*, he discovered a novel medium called the Internet, which retailers worried at that time was going to put every store out of business. In 1998 he started covering technology full time, including the rise and fall (and rise) of dot-coms in Detroit.

Q: Automotive and technology companies are abundant in Southeast Michigan. Some say this will benefit our economy. Do you agree?

A: Detroit has gone from being the bicep to being the brains of the automotive industry. All you have to do is look at the recent decisions of Toyota and Hyundai-Kia to add literally thousands of automotive engineering jobs right here. These jobs are less cyclical than our old manufacturing base, and that's good. But they also require significantly more education, so we must continue to invest in that area. Also, it's not completely without risk.

Modern engineering tools and high-speed Internet connections make it possible to send these automotive engineering jobs offshore, and it's hard to compete with folks in India making 5 dollars an hour, much less people in China making 37 cents an hour. We have to make sure our skills stay high, and also ensure that trade agreements are fair. Manufacturing is in decline across the country and we have to deal with that somehow. We have to retain some basic ability to build stuff.

Q: Give a few examples of companies in Southeastern Michigan you think are using technology to the fullest?

A: Beyond obvious choices like Compuware, some of my favorite tech companies in the region are small niche software companies with amazing products. Companies like Proforma Corp., which makes business process modeling software and now sells 14 million dollars of it a year. Companies like Universal Data, which makes supply chain software called Phyletec that does amazing things. There's another company here that makes terrific interactive voice response software for auto dealers – combining IT with our ultimate legacy industry.

I am consistently surprised by the quality of the area's IT consulting and services.

Nobody thinks we're high-tech in Michigan, and a big part of my job is to correct that misperception.

Q: What new technologies coming down the pipeline in the next 5 to 10 years will improve or revolutionize the way we do business today?

A: If I knew for sure, would I be working for a radio station? I will state the fairly obvious – ubiquitous, wireless high-speed Web access will continue to change the way people work. My job consists of reading press releases and over-the-transom e-mail tips, following up with phone interviews, surfing the Web for tips and background information, writing, layout of an HTML document, and posting it to a secure Web site for distribution. I can do that from anywhere there's an Internet connection – home, road, whatever. More and more white-collar jobs are in the same situation. If you're not actually turning a wrench you can work from anywhere.

What I don't know is whether management will be as progressive and hands-off as mine is, and allow their staffs to work from home or another remote location. It seems to me that as long as the work is getting done, on time and of good quality, who cares where it's done? Besides, think of the savings in office real estate costs.

I also think blogs, RSS feeds and podcasts are going to take over for newspapers, magazines and radio stations. But I also might mention that when I see the MySpace phenomenon, which came literally out of nowhere and took over the teen and 20-something world in less than a year, I realize the futility of predicting tech trends. I can't wait to see what my kids go nuts for next.

Q: What obstacles do you anticipate IT professionals will face in the near future, and how do you suggest IT professionals overcome these obstacles?

A: Offshoring is the biggest and most obvious threat. A lot of what used to be entry-level jobs are already overseas, and it's hard to get training for higher-level jobs if you can't get your feet wet at the entry level. All we can do at this point is keep honing our skills and fostering our creativity. There are still a lot of great jobs here, especially in contexts where understanding local culture and idiom are important. Project managers, content creators, security personnel, and for the most part designers need to be local.

We also need to make sure that the world is flat in both directions – that we here in Michigan take full advantage of our global opportunities. We have to let the world know about the skills and creativity that are here.

Q: What advice can you give to the people in the IT industry regarding the future of the field and our economy?

A: The sky's the limit. There are challenges, but boy, just think of what we're doing now compared to when I first started covering the Internet in 1994! Technology is no longer something you bring into the business; for most companies these days, it is the business. Look at the automotive industry. Technology has revolutionized the way cars are designed, from the way they're built to the way they're sold to the way they're serviced, and the opportunities are still huge. Most auto suppliers haven't even installed a real product lifecycle management system. Doing something so simple will make them more efficient, which will help them survive and help the Michigan economy – while providing huge opportunities for software and IT services firms.

Consultant



Otis Glenn

STATS

Title: Technology Specialist and Data Architect

Hire Date: November 2005

Responsibilities: Manage, design, develop and deliver computer information systems for Epittec clients.

Education: Wayne State University, bachelor of science degree in computer science.

Quote: "The years of experience and dedicated staff at Epittec provide a comfort level so I can focus solely on the client's needs. I enjoy building valued customer relationships through successful delivery of assigned tasks."

iSpot Exclusive: Otis initially started college to major in accounting but using computers to assist in projects changed his mind.

Corporate Employee



Sandy Major

STATS

Title: Recruiter

Hire Date: March 2005

Responsibilities: Recruiting, screening of IT consultants for contract placement opportunities, searching for top talent via Monster, Dice and our corporate internal database, and networking with user groups and other outside sources which may provide access to qualified IT consultants.

Quote: "I have had the pleasure of placing qualified IT personnel such as project managers for Blue Cross Blue Shield and security architects for Comerica Bank. I've recently reached a milestone goal of placing 25 consultants for the year."

iSpot Exclusive: Sandy is a recruiting veteran with more than 15 years of experience.



Vaibhav Ghosalker, Chandra Kayambo, Mohini Karwande, Mani Kondapaneni, Karla Teat, Rajeev Kumar, Rakash Patel, Sandeep Nair, LaToya Harris, Joe Bigos, Robert Bryson, Thotakura Kishore, Ilyas Syed, Christina Martinez, Daya Nair, Levin Mootosamy, Catherine Dawley, Suganthi Srinivasan, Frank Flood, Margery White, Prakash Aree, Yigal Ran, Vinod Surapaneni, Naveen Gatta, Susan Broadnax, Torleice Anderson, Mashod Ahmad, Ashok Ganesan, Prashant Aneja, Wynett Summers, Bill McInness

Epittec is partnering with Compuware Corporation to provide resources for the City of Detroit's 25.6 million dollar Oracle HR/Payroll software implementation program. Started in October 2005, this project is part of the Human Resource Management System (HRMS) and is scheduled to be complete in October 2007.

Thus far Epittec has provided significant resources to the project, including developers, a project coordinator, an Oracle benefits functional lead, an applications architect, and a transformation manager. The City depends heavily on the Epittec consultants to act as a checkpoint between the City and Xcelicor, Compuware's other partner in this program, to ensure that the best possible solution is ultimately implemented. Also Epittec is responsible for change management, communications and training coordination. This role is very important because it leads the charge in preparing City employees for the upcoming HR and payroll changes.

Epittec has a long-standing relationship with the City of Detroit and has provided resources for many of its endeavors. Joan Moss, project portfolio manager, states "I have personally worked with Epittec for five years. They've consistently provided quality technical and training resources. I look to them for resource augmentation, not only for this project, but for others as well. They've never let me down."

Milestones

July

Prakash Kulandaisamy (3 years)
Austin Diaz (3 years)
Simone Yuki (3 years)

August

Vidya Acharya (5 years)
David Arbogast (5 years)

September

Brigette Stargell (3 years)
Jessica Kurzym (3 years)
Swati Patil (5 years)
Charles Modzinski (5 years)



From Start To Finish, We're There For You.

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