Streamlining Management, Using IT

Using IT proactively to solve problems for the entire business

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In the past, the role of information technology (IT) was mainly to make administrative processing more efficient. Now, however, IT is being used as a main strategic contributor to management and business, thanks to the improvement of computer performance and the evolution of the Internet. Specific examples of this include streamlining the entire supply chain, quickly aggregating global management information and making it highly accessible, and enabling interactive communication within the company.

One of the most important issues for a company is building a strong corporate organization. At Casio, administrative reform and IT utilization are being carried out in close cooperation. While continually keeping pace with market changes, Casio is promoting a system for comprehensive management of the process from production to sales. Based on the idea of self reliance for internal system construction, we are building a system that is optimal overall, while sharing Casio's vision for using IT with group companies around the world.

As information technology advances, so do its uses. Of course, identifying issues faced by business sites is still important, including strengthening administrative speed and competitiveness and reducing environmental impact. Today, however, a company's competitiveness lies in finding groundbreaking methods to improve its competitive edge. The staff of the Information Technology Department looks at the entire business from a management mindset, and works to resolve issues by applying technologies that are one step ahead. This greatly contributes to improvement of management efficiency and speed.

Management "Visualization" through Standardized Systems

Casio has globally introduced and developed an integrated enterprise resource planning (ERP) system. It serves as an information infrastructure for streamlining the core business functions of purchasing, sales and accounting.

Operations and systems that used to be different for each site or business have been thoroughly standardized and integrated. This is helping to accelerate management decision-making by making it easier to see and grasp the big picture of corporate activities across the board.

The ERP system performs unified management of sales and inventory information. By linking this information with sales forecast information from the market, the system is being used to establish production plans that ensure reliable delivery of the products customers want, when they want them. It is also driving significant improvements in supply chain management, including the reduction of inventories through improved inventory efficiency.

Recently, Casio introduced new technology for modularizing common functions in the ERP infrastructure and using them group-wide. The modules can be customized to meet the needs of each site or business. In this way, Casio is striving to improve the added value of its systems. Building systems that can rapidly and flexibly adapt to changes in the business environment is indispensable in making the most of IT to contribute to the business.

Sales Activity Support Using CRM

The Information Technology Department continues to make improvements that help employees to increase productivity and contribute to a creative business. It is doing this by providing more intuitive computer interfaces that are easier to understand, through business support systems that are based on Internet technology.

The department developed a customer relationship management (CRM) system in house for the sales departments.

Since it is a system utilized by many sales staff, CRM employs the latest Web technology for good usability, including simple inputting, and ease of information retrieval. The result is a very convenient system that would not be possible with a commercial software package. Through the use of the CRM system, sales activities and cooperation between the headquarters and individual sites has been streamlined. Moreover, Casio's sales ability has been further strengthened through the sharing of expertise for sales promotion and negotiation.

Integration of Backbone Servers and Disaster Prevention Measures

Casio is promoting the integration of its backbone servers throughout the entire group to control server costs. Server operation can also be made more efficient due to centralization. By installing integrated servers in secure data centers, information security is being strengthened group-wide.
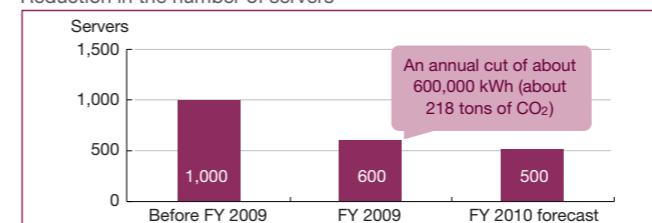
As of March 2009, the integration of 18 core servers had been completed, as part of an integration program being conducted not just in Japan, but also at Casio sites in China and other countries in Asia.

The integration of backbone servers also involves setting up two servers in two separate data center locations. In the event of an earthquake or other disaster affecting one location, the server at the other location will still be able to operate.

Reducing CO_2 Emissions with Green IT

In addition to the integration of core servers, Casio is also working on the integration of other business and department servers. There were as many as 1,000 servers across the group before integration began. Most of them were operating 365 days a year, and the power they consumed, as well as the corresponding CO_2 emissions, was considerable. Integration was carried out by using "virtual server" technology, which involves the operation of multiple servers within one server. This resulted in a large decrease in the number of servers and a corresponding decrease in the amount of power consumed.

Reduction in the number of servers

Servers			
1,500			
1,000	1,000	An annual cut of about 600,000 kWh (about 218 tons of CO_2)	
500		600	500
0	Before FY 2009	FY 2009	FY 2010 forecast

As of December 2008, the integration of 400 servers was completed. This is equal to an annual savings in electrical consumption of about 600,000 kWh, which translates into a CO_2 emissions reduction of about 218 tons. In fiscal 2010, Casio plans to finish integrating 500 servers, thereby halving the number of its servers, and saving a total of 750,000 kWh per year.

In March 2009, data center air conditioners were changed to energy-saving models, a move expected to reduce Casio's annual CO_2 emissions by about 82 tons. The company will continue to take active measures using "Green IT" in the future.

Reducing Costs and Environmental Impact with a New Purchasing System

Casio has built a specialized purchasing system called CATS for the purchase of indirect materials such as office supplies, office equipment, software, and production supplies. CATS has been introduced in principal group companies in Japan. The supplies bought and purchasing procedures used to vary from company to company in the group. With the aim of lowering purchasing costs group-wide, the system was constructed in order to standardize all purchasing and to allow the purchasing department to negotiate prices with suppliers and make bulk purchases. Since everything is performed online, from finding supplies, making purchase applications, and receiving authorization, to placing orders with suppliers and performing product receiving procedures, CATS not only improves business efficiency, but also reduces the amount of paper consumed in documents such as order forms.

The online product catalog also clearly indicates products that are eco-friendly, which makes it easy for employees to select those products and help promote green purchasing.

CATS System helps staff find eco-products.

Stronger Internal Controls through ISMS Certification

In February 2008, the Information Technology Department of Casio Computer Co., Ltd., and Casio Information Service Co., Ltd., obtained ISO/IEC 27001 certification, which is the international standard for information security management systems (ISMS). The aim was to maintain and improve Casio's high-quality information security, and to establish internal controls in compliance with Japan's new Financial Instruments and Exchange Law.

ISMS is a framework for the ongoing operation of systems for setting security levels based on rules and risk assessment, that helps companies and organizations to secure and maintain their own information security. These Casio organizations implemented management measures based on set targets and an information asset risk assessment, while ensuring thorough awareness of rules for the proper management of information assets. Security conditions are confirmed through regular inspections and audits, and problems areas are promptly corrected and improved, which leads to better security. In the future, internal controls will be further strengthened through these activities, and even tighter security will be promoted across the group.