

Ad hoc Web 2.0 use sparks new venture

CLAIRE McENTEE - The Dominion Post | Monday, 28 April 2008

Hewlett Packard and Cisco have teamed up to promote the use of Web 2.0 technologies such as wikis and blogs in businesses.

Hewlett Packard will provide consulting services and Cisco the network infrastructure.

Paul Mitchener, Hewlett Packard's New Zealand sales manager, says Web 2.0 applications are starting to appear in businesses in an ad-hoc fashion, and while many organisations believe they are "strategic investments" few have actual strategies.

CIOs need to understand the need for these or their organisations will become isolated, he says.

"It's the 'network effect' applied to communications, with corporate data - the more people interact the richer the data will become."

Web 2.0 is in demand among young people, who are businesses' future employees. "They come into companies and say 'where are the blogs and the wikis?'"

Businesses could customise Web 2.0 applications for certain projects. "You could use a Second Life application where business processes are demonstrated to get people up to speed very quickly with how it works."

Auckland software company Orion Health has championed the advantages of Web 2.0 in the workplace.

Chief executive Ian McCrae said last year the company had benefited greatly from running its own wiki - an internal knowledge bank for developing and implementing software, providing customer support and for administration.

Mr Mitchener says Web 2.0 and unified communications are just as relevant to government departments, and local bodies have shown an interest in establishing community networks.

Last year Police invited public comment on its review of the Police Act by posting a wiki - a draft of the act - online. The Government has now set up a wiki to solicit comments on a review of its Digital Strategy.