



Ben Eazzetta

Editor's Note: Beginning with this VDI, **martinwolf** is including an interview with an executive from a firm in this space to provide his or her perspective on ongoing trends and how they affect the way he or she does business. Today we include **Ben Eazzetta**, president of international operations for **Rolta India Limited**, who provided his thoughts on the crisis in Europe, the economic future for China and other relevant topics.

What are your thoughts on Europe and how it will affect your business and your industry as a whole?

There's no doubt that what's going on in Europe is affecting our business as Rolta is primarily in the U.K., with some business in Central Europe. Uncertainty in the markets has slowed down business in the sector. To give you an example of how cautious the industry is, one of our clients is requiring each department to sign off on synergies listed in the investment approval documents—a level of scrutiny that I've never seen before. Ultimately, businesses are doing a lot more questioning to make sure that they are embarking on the right projects.

China. Hard or soft landing?

I think the Chinese government has done a great job managing their economy. They've blown me away with the returns they've been getting and how they've been able to manage people and the economy as a whole. Betting against them is a bad thing to do. The inflation rate is very low, and I expect them to do something to pump up growth again soon. I've seen growth rates in the 6-7% range quoted in various places, but I ultimately see them able to get back up to decent growth rates. Europe is currently the more disconcerting topic.

What do you think are the three biggest trends affecting the IT business sector today?

One of the bigger trends is definitely Business Intelligence (BI). Seeing companies begin to embrace business intelligence and figure out how to architect solutions between their customers and the information they gather about their industry will be key for companies to set themselves apart and succeed.

Another trend is the rise of Big Data. The combination of having huge amounts of information available and having the infrastructure to keep track of and manage it opens up many new possibilities for businesses. This trend ties into the first one—companies need to ask themselves “how do you mine big data and take advantage of it?”

The third trend is toward Software and Cloud Services, which has no indication of stopping. Everything from virtual desktops to Oracle on Demand is going to continue to improve over time and become more prevalent in the coming years.

Talk through Rolta's cross-border M&A Strategy.

BE: Rolta is concentrating heavily in North America where we think there are opportunities for business development. I think that we might see ourselves making some acquisitions in Europe, or making some offerings—things of that nature—but our primary focus in is North America.

How does the Cloud alter your go-to-market strategy?

Rolta had primarily been an IT Services/IT solutions provider, but our acquisition of Orion enabled us to do GIS- web based solutions. The Cloud lets our clients sit at their desk, connected to the web, and be incredibly productive. The trend of moving toward the Cloud is something that we've been aware of and have been acting on for a long time. And as people get more comfortable with the security aspects of the Cloud and use it for their databases, we see this as a continuing positive trend driven by the potential for increased returns on investment. There are also increasing openings as the cloud enables companies to catalogue big data.

Where does mobile fit into your long-term strategy?

We're building our solutions so we can access everything on the iPhone, from virtualization tools to GIS and others. There are more than a [billion mobile broadband subscriptions](#) today. And with iPhones, iPads, Android phones, and all the other platforms, we're going to have a very connected world. People need to get ready to build applications and solutions to take advantage of it. Mobile is an integral part of our long-term strategy.

What are your thoughts on Social Media (both for consumer communications and business strategies)?

It's interesting. I would say some companies are ahead of others in terms of long-term social media strategies. We have [nearly six billion people connected](#) to various devices around the world, which is a global penetration of 87 percent. I think there's going to be a lot of dynamic changes resulting from this. Will the direct sales model still work at that point? Maybe we won't need a direct salesperson, and salespeople can take different roles. At Rolta, we're not doing a lot of things with social media today, but that's mainly due to the nature of our business. We primarily work with groups that are slow to adopt social media, like local

governments, utilities and oil and gas companies. I think, though, that social media will work its way down to the B2B sector.

Do you find yourself working more or less as the digital age progresses?

It's more, but it's a different kind of work.. I'm never unconnected today. I used to enjoy trips from North America to Asia because I thought "I can do some offline work on the plane, then when my battery dies I can put it away and finish later." But now flights have wireless connectivity and AC plugs, so they have become time for email and Skype. It's becoming more and more rare for executives to have free time—instead, now we mainly have brief snippets of free time surrounded by constant connectivity.