



Tom Richards

President and CEO, CDW

Today we include **Tom Richards**, president and CEO of **CDW**, who provided his thoughts on the cross-border M&A, the importance of the cloud and other relevant topics.

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

TR: Today's IT environment is more dynamic than ever; new technologies and products are being introduced and rapidly deployed into our customers' strategies. The top three trends our customers are engaging us on are mobility, cloud and big data because they believe these technologies — when strategically combined — can deliver a competitive advantage. That being said, there continues to be heavy investment in virtualization and unified communications. Most importantly, our customers continue to prioritize, invest and align their IT strategies with their business strategies and CDW is privileged to be part of that process.

MW: Talk through your cross-border M&A Strategy

TR: We believe we have 5 percent of a \$200 billion market in the US and Canada. There's plenty of opportunity to drive growth in North America. However, we're always evaluating our strategy and looking for incremental opportunities for scale. Still, our focus is on executing our core strategy.

MW: How does the cloud alter your go-to market strategy?

TR: It enhances our strategy to be the leading IT solutions provider in the markets we serve. One of our core goals is to continue to expand our solutions suite, which includes providing cloud computing expertise and capabilities. CDW recently announced a new partnership with salesforce.com that will diversify our cloud offerings.

Through this partnership, we are able to provide both CDW and CDW-G customers with cost effective cloud solutions, as well as social, mobile and open capabilities of Salesforce.com's cloud technologies. In addition, our managed services capabilities are a differentiator for CDW. Whether it's public, private or hybrid cloud, CDW's size and technical resources help companies implement and integrate cloud solutions.

MW: Where does mobile fit into your long-term strategy?

TR: Mobility presents huge opportunities for CDW customers because of its ability to deliver speed and responsiveness to improve their customer experience. We know that people want to use the same

technology at work as they use at home, and IT organizations are becoming more comfortable managing BYOD environments because we can provide them with the critical tools to manage the network, risk, privacy and compliance that come along with consumer-based technologies.

But, to me, the more exciting aspects of mobile technology are happening with business applications, especially in the areas of CRM, warranty management and service organizations. These applications are profoundly improving the way our customers serve their customers by providing them with the technologies, tools and capabilities to make it happen.

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

TR: There are conversations happening every day that shape brands and influence customer opinions, so we think social media plays an important role in both. For CDW, the customer has always been at the center of everything we do, so being able to engage with them in a compelling way via social media has helped us not only improve how we work as an organization, but also build a community of advocates for the brand.

MW: Do you tweet or utilize any Social Media tools?

BE: CDW continually adopts new strategies in the social space to engage customers, coworkers and the public. Social media has been a great driver of our brand messages. For me personally, I still value face-to-face conversations and believe one-to-one relationships are equally important in how a customer feels about you and your company.

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

TR: Probably the same. For most people, it's not always about if we are working more or less but *how we work* that changes. Technology certainly enables people to be more connected, which can therefore increase productivity and overall efficiency in an organization. It doesn't mean you have to work 24/7.