

Well-Planned Briefings Provide Tremendous Intelligence and Value

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While IBM and other manufacturers continue to accelerate new model releases of servers and other platforms, it becomes increasingly important for end user customers to stay abreast of product plans and future releases. End users have a variety of needs that vary, depending upon current technology deployed and developing requirements.

We often hear about upgrade paths, new features contemplated for the future and completely new series of solutions. Determining the best path to take in solution evolution can be challenging. Often, manufacturers do not reveal specifics about upgrade paths very far in advance of release dates.

Clients often ask questions going beyond new performance specs, capabilities, and features. Many clients want to know whether current installed models can be easily upgraded to the future offerings, whether there will be "serial number protection" offered by the manufacturer, and whether purchasing today will offer any aspect of investment protection when viewing a future model that will not be out for awhile. There are many different financial and accounting considerations that influence what a customer can invest in.

Customers should consider getting involved with manufacturer briefings and other initiatives that can serve to provide as much insight into the realities of the future offerings as possible. Take IBM pSeries for example. The IBM Austin briefing center conducts confidential future product roadmap sessions whether in Austin or of an "outbound" nature at your office or at a meeting facility sponsored by an IBM Business Partner.

The best technical briefings are organized in advance giving the briefers a centralized area of interest and preference in order to individualize the material prior to the meeting. Clients get more value this way for the time invested. Without user input, the briefers will present what they think the unknown audience wants to see and hear.

At Datatrend, we work closely with the various IBM brands in support of delivering value to customers in various solution seminars and briefings. History has shown that when we solicit questions and interest points from clients and prep the IBMers accordingly, customers walk away with enhanced value received for the time invested.

Investing back in the customer relationship by funding and sponsoring general and tailored briefings is important to the Datatrend team. Briefings can take on a general product line overview flavor, can be quite technical on the other end of the spectrum, or can zero in on a specific like DLPAR (Dynamic Logical Partitioning), HACMP (Highly Available Clustered Multi Processing), Server Consolidation, Virtualization, and performance tuning. Whether value is found in participating in a session event designed for multiple clients and prospects or in an issue-specific, tailored, private session, consider Datatrend's ability and desire to serve.

***Datatrend's TrendSetter eNewsletter
January 15, 2004***