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# IBM's Role in Delivering the Green Data Centre: A CFO Perspective

*Video Case Study Transcript*



From the Green IT Innovation Series

# IBM's Role in Delivering the Green Data Centre: A CFO Perspective

## *Video Case Study Transcript*

*This document contains an edited transcription from a video interview with Glenn Vollebregt, Senior Vice President, Finance and Administration for St. Lawrence College. Our interview was held at St. Lawrence College's Kingston, Ontario location on April 16, 2010. This transcript is based on one part of a longer interview conducted by Michael O'Neil, Chief Content Officer for IT in Canada.*

**Michael O'Neil:** Many times our clients work hand in hand with their suppliers to develop business cases that include energy costs, and consolidation, and virtualization, and centralization. I know you worked with IBM on this project. What role did they play in helping to persuade you that this was a good investment from an OPEX, from a CAPEX, from a green, and from a responsiveness to your student body perspective?

**Glenn Vollebregt:** I think IBM was instrumental in the role that they played. First of all, our primary contact with IBM on this project was an engineer. That ties into what I've been talking about – IBM was able to bring the engineering, the green technology, green initiatives, and marry it with the technology and the business aspect of [the data centre initiative]. For us, it was like having a great facilitator in the room to manage all these different pieces. They brought forward the experience and the education and the background to the table.

It was tremendous, actually. It was my first experience with the construction of a data center. I remember at our first meeting, I was really quite surprised – and pleased – that the person that we were dealing with was an engineer.

**Michael:** I think that's a good point. Data centers get built somewhere all the time. But in any one place, they get built every 10 or 20 years.

**Glenn:** That's right.

**Michael:** It wouldn't surprise me that talking to a supplier would bring some external expertise on that subject. Did you also take advantage of IBM's understanding of how a data center like this can help you to better align with student needs, with business needs, or reference accounts that you



Glenn Vollebregt, Senior Vice President, Finance & Administration, St. Lawrence College

could rely on?

**Glenn:** Yes. That's a great point, actually. One of the things, I think, that IBM brings to the table is they do look at the business need, and how does it fit to your business model; how does it fit to your customer base. That's what they bring first. Technology comes after. It's first "solve that problem," and then figure out, "OK, what kind of technology do we need to solve the problem?" They were very good. The first question that they'll ask is, "Why are you doing this?" Not, "let's get into the data centre, let's get into the construction of the data centre" – not at all. "Why are you doing this – how will this benefit your customers?" I think that was a tremendous way to start the project."

**Michael:** As well as aligning to your guidance to IT {when approaching a CFO about an IT project}, "don't talk about the technology – talk about the business."

**Glenn:** Absolutely.

**Michael:** Well, thank you so much! We're here with Glenn Vollebregt, Senior Vice President, Finance and Administration for St. Lawrence College. I'm Michael O'Neil for the IT in Canada network. Glenn, thank you so much!