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Chief Information Officers (CIOs) have become one of the key persons in business management. Being an IT professional, they oversee all the works related to technology. In this article by Totty (2011), three CIOs were asked about the challenges and opportunities a CIO faces. They are Norm Fjeldheim, CIO for Qualcomm, Inc.; Filippo Passerini, CIO of Procter & Gamble, Co.; and Frank Wander, CIO at Guardian Life Insurance Co. of America. They were asked about the changes in their job in the past five years, their relationship with other business units, and the challenges they face and the way they handle it. These three approached each question professionally. To note, the general response was that we are living in a technological age that demands everything to be automated, thus the roles of CIOs have grown very big. IT professionals are an integral part of a business nowadays as they can transform the way business is done. Moreover, data are now contained in a cloud which enables multiple access and connections between different units and organizations. It Professionals provide business automation for easier and faster processes.
This article explains the roles of CIOs clearly. It explains how I should run my department as CIO of my company. Five years ago, my role would have been something short of a technician, but with how fast-paced technology is, my role has become very important that a huge part of the business depends on my department. Moreover, this article gives me an insight on the decisions that I should make, and how I should approach the challenges related to the technical aspects of the business. IT is embedded into each unit of the business, thus I am part of the decision-making body. Every department has a budget allotted to IT, and according to Fjeldheim, our role is to help them invest on proper IT components. Consumer technology has converged with the enterprise, and this creates a completely different dynamics that I have to adjust to for the company’s growth and well-being.
Personally, this article gives me someone to look up to and to follow. As CIO, I have to provide solutions and information to enable the business across lots of different platforms that are changing at a very rapid pace, something that dictates the overall course of the company. It implies security measures and higher user expectations. Fjeldheim responds to this challenge by enabling employess to access information and get the tools they need, or “ self-service” as he terms it. Passerini describes a solution to this problem as application-centric and device-agnostic, that the competitive advantage is not on how developed the devices used in the company are, but rather in the ways you make use of these devices. Wander, on the other hand, remarks that CIOs have to have focus on both the growth and the expense management of the business for strategic planning and predictions. There is always an element of pressure for me and my co-CIOs to be very attentive and constantly anticipate what could go wrong.