



## Ptak, Noel & Associates

The Authority in IT Convergence Strategies

### Collective Technologies: End-to-End Data Center Management

Collective Technologies (CT) provides IT infrastructure services and solutions to enterprise IT customers across the full spectrum of market segments. Their data center practice provides comprehensive services from design and implementation of the physical environment to maintenance and moves of complete data center operating installations. On March 21, 2006, they announced Data Center LifeCycle Management™, an integrated solution which covers IT infrastructure, physical layer and relocation services that help companies analyze, plan, build, expand and/or relocate facilities to create “adaptive data centers” able to respond to the dynamic demands of business and technology. Let’s see what Collective Technologies brings to the market and how it benefits enterprise IT.



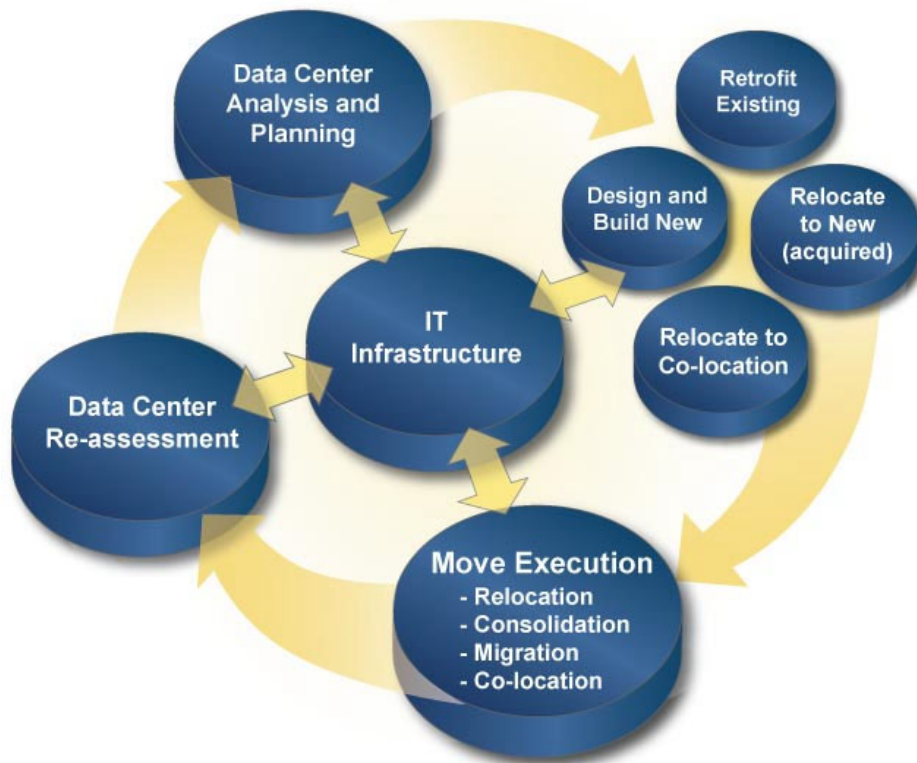
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### Complete IT Infrastructure Services and Solutions

In just 12 years, Collective Technologies alone and in partnership with major vendors has delivered over 5 million hours of consulting on the delivery of IT infrastructure services. From this experience, CT built expertise in process-oriented services that enable enterprises in a wide range of markets to successfully implement mission-critical changes in their data center environments. Delivered services include data center analysis and planning, design and build, relocation, and ongoing evaluation of data center operations. As a part of its delivery process, CT developed the set of methodologies and disciplines that lie at the heart of their Data Center Lifecycle Management (DCLM) solution.

The secret to Collective’s success is the end-to-end view and management of change events including interdependent operational ecosystems that extend across multiple vendors responsible for real estate, OEMs, planning, construction, etc. CT coordinates management across this range of projects required for cost-effective data center expansion, operations, and evolution. CT’s DCLM solution helps to control enterprise costs by facilitating the specification and building of flexible facilities that address near-term operational needs while avoiding the traditional pitfalls of over-provisioning and over-building.

With the economic downturn behind us, enterprises are spending more and more to update data centers with technologies that match dynamically evolving business realities. Historical IT strategies involved wedging new equipment into existing data centers or simply expanding into adjacent space. Between tight existing real estate and the need for additional physical space, such an approach is simply unworkable in today's climate. To realize the full potential of data center technologies, companies must design facilities that can adapt to ongoing IT infrastructure and application requirements that arise from the increasing sophistication and computing demands that are part of core business strategies. CT has built its reputation and expertise through confronting and creatively solving the challenges of adapting data center capabilities and construction in tightly constrained conditions. As a result, they are well positioned to provide economic and effective solutions in today's environment.



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Figure 1 Data Center LifeCycle Management

### Data Center LifeCycle Management

As shown in Figure 1, CT's Data Center LifeCycle Management Solution consists of four service modules:

- Data Center Analysis and Planning – analyzes current and future data center needs using existing computing and network infrastructure inventories, application maps and projected future needs and comparing these to current physical infrastructure, then based on client budget, goals, and objectives it develops a recommended course of action.
- Design, Build and Commission – using the output from the Data Center Analysis and Planning module, this service executes the design and construction recommendations in a modular manner. Companies are able to commit only the capital necessary for the short term to grow facilities as their IT infrastructure needs expand.
- Relocation – plans and executes data center relocations, consolidations and migrations. Trained and experienced project management teams coordinate all aspects of data center moves and with a single point of customer contact.
- Periodic Data Center Evaluation – provides quarterly updates to the high level data center strategy and provides an early warning for future required data center changes.

Most IT service providers specialize in one of three areas:

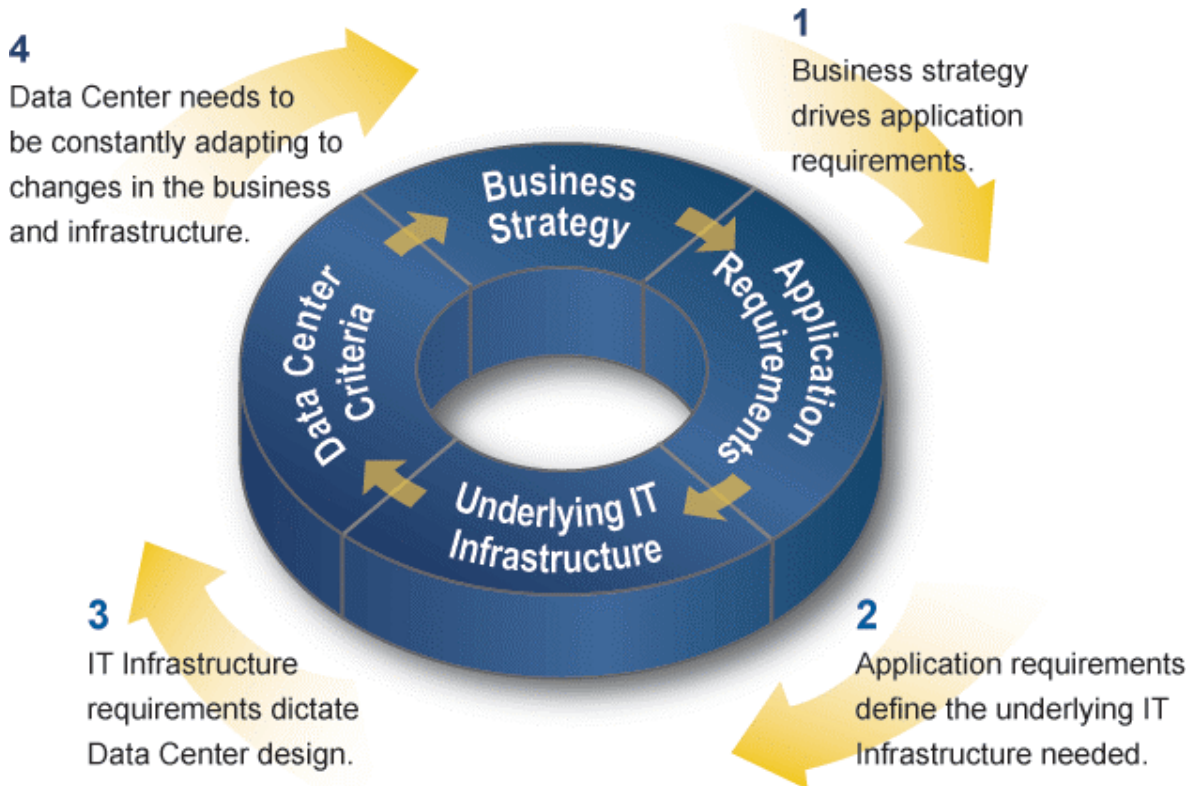
1. IT Infrastructure – focusing on and serving the needs of the perceived stakeholder i.e. the IT department;
2. Physical Layer – focusing on and serving the needs of the perceived stakeholder i.e. the facilities;
3. Relocation and Move - focusing on and serving the needs of the perceived stakeholders i.e. the IT department/facilities in combination.

Such specialization is inadequate for the challenges associated with supporting and managing today's complex data center environments. Collective is unique in offering an integrated set of services to provide a single point of contact to address the needs of all involved stakeholders.

PNA thinks this end-to-end view and packaging of services finds a willing audience and market in today's enterprises. Collective puts together a full range of services that leverage each client's capabilities and knowledge of their business, strategy, goals, resources, and limitations. The client's resources feed into and capitalize on the in-depth specialized knowledge embedded in CT's best practice processes tested and proven in those millions of hours of consulting time. PNA has repeatedly stated that today's enterprise wants complete solutions to their business and IT operational problems. Designing, re-vamping, or moving a data center is no exception. No enterprise wants or needs the additional stress of acting as its own contractor to coordinate multiple sets of resources to undertake a data center move they may have never done or done once under very different circumstances.

## Data Center Life Cycle

Collective takes a holistic view of the Data Center Life Cycle. It recognizes that the utility of the Data Center begins and ends with its link to the overall business strategy. This concept is at the heart of their entire process for defining, designing, and providing services. Figure 2 illustrates the ‘circle of life’ (PNA’s term) for creating and maintaining a Data Center that adapts in service to the enterprise.



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Figure 2 The Adaptive Data Center

When Collective put up this image, PNA recognized that this company really understands the mission and role of IT in the enterprise. As Collective proceeded to document its understanding and ability with specific strategies, products and services that convinced us this was not just ephemeral ‘slide-ware’ and ‘presentation-speak.’ Collective has the products and delivery experience that will help IT and the enterprise to get the Data Center needed to deal with the demands of today’s complex computing and business environments.

## Final Word

In the experience of Ptak, Noel & Associates, the IT market in the year 2006 is accelerating and expanding at a pace we have not seen in some time. As CT points out there exists significant pent up demand for infrastructure and equipment as well as software upgrades to handle IT's growing role in the enterprise. Expansion in resources and responsibilities has put pressure on the physical operating environments that many enterprises will be expanding and/or moving equipment. CT is one of the few companies that can offer a complete, integrated solution specifically organized, implemented and based on extensive IT-specific experience. PNA is convinced that CT will find itself very busy for at the very least the next 5 years.

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**About Ptak, Noel & Associates**

With a belief that business success and IT success are inseparable, Ptak, Noel & Associates works with clients to identify, understand and respond to the implications of today's trends and innovations on the future of IT Operations.

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**About the Author**

Richard Ptak has extensive experience working closely with Fortune 500 companies in developing product direction and strategies at a global level. Rich has held positions as senior vice president at Hurwitz Group and D.H. Brown Associates. He has held engineering and marketing management positions with Western Electric's Electronic Switch Manufacturing Division and Digital Equipment Corporation. He is frequently quoted in major business and trade press such as The Wall Street Journal, Business Week, eWeek, InformationWeek, and Computer World. He is author of "Manager's Guide to Distributed Environments," (John Wiley & Sons, 1998). In addition, Ptak was technical editor of "Cisco Internet Architecture Essentials Study Guide: Cisco Internet Solutions Specialist" by Recore, Laursen, and Herrmann (Cisco Press, 2002). Rich earned his MBA from the University of Chicago, and his MS in engineering from Kansas State University.

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