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Where will technology take accounting and finance in the next five years?

Executive Summary

When technology first made its way into business, it was known as data processing and was firmly under the control of the finance department. The logic could not be flawed – the first processes to be automated were financial, and technology was seen simply as a tool that allowed that automation.

In the 40 or so years since those early days, there has been a sea of change. Technology is now everywhere. Not only has it dramatically decreased the need for clerks to process finance transactions, it has automated operations processes, marketing processes, sales processes – indeed, every process within a business.

Yet the relationship between finance and IT, between the CFO and CIO, has not always evolved to meet this new reality. Especially in small and medium-sized enterprises – which comprise the vast majority of New Zealand businesses – IT is still subordinated to finance.

As technology increasingly underpins every aspect of business – and as the technologically savvy generation of 'digital natives' who have grown up in an IT world take over the workforce – this will change.

Advances in technology will allow more accurate decisions to be made more quickly, and they will be made by a more technologically literate workforce.

But equally, this requires a change in focus for the position of CIO – a change that is well under way, but will increase in pace. The most senior technology executive is in transition from being an IT specialist to a generalist who is able to translate the language of IT into the language of business, and base decisions not on what is the best technology, but what is best for the enterprise as a whole.

The challenge now for education providers is to develop a business focus in the new generation of technologically literate young people, so that they are at home not only with the tools that IT delivers, but they will also understand the enterprise-wide implications of what those tools can deliver.

“If you look at traditional business structure you have marketing, operations and finance. Well technology underlies all of it – it’s under all those three traditional activities, so therefore deserves its own function at the top table. Because it’s not part of finance, it’s not part of operations, it’s not part of marketing – it’s all of them.”

Mark Benjamin, CFO, Excell Corporation



Megan Alexander and Terry McLaughlin



Participants

- Megan Alexander, Senior Manager, Robert Half International
- David Alley, GM - Finance and Corporate Services, Competenz
- Pieter Bakker, CIO, Ports of Auckland Limited
- Mark Benjamin, CFO, Excell Corporation Limited
- David Ingram, CFO, Zeacom Limited
- Steve McGowan, Division Manager, Robert Half Technology
- Judith McKay, GM - Finance & Resources, AUT University
- Terry McLaughlin, CEO, New Zealand Institute of Chartered Accountants
- Martyn Seddon, GM - Information Systems, Turners & Growers Limited
- Kelvin Wong, CFO, New Zealand Institute of Chartered Accountants
- Simeon Wright, CFO, Dystance NZ Limited

Part A: The past and the present

The present relationship between CIO and CFO, IT and finance

The reporting relationship between IT and finance, between CIOs and CFOs, is in a state of flux. It started as one of subordination – technology was something that was used simply to automate financial tasks, before it began spreading its remit to other functions within the business.

But now, technology is ubiquitous, underpinning every aspect of business from finance to operations, marketing, sales and beyond. Businesses are realising IT can no longer be subordinated to finance – some have already made the change, while others are moving to that view.

As Robert Half Technology Division Manager Steve McGowan wrote in the June 2008 issue of CIO magazine: *“More and more, New Zealand companies are realising this is a relationship that needs to be formalised, with finance and IT equally crucial to any business”*.

Even though international statistics show a definite trend away from CIOs reporting through the CFO, New Zealand’s chief executives, chief financial officers and chief information officers see no single template for this reporting relationship – rather, it is a function of business size and evolution.

Newer enterprises and small to medium-sized enterprises – which by Ministry of Economic Development figures account for 96% of all New Zealand enterprises – are seldom able to afford the cost of a dedicated technology executive. In such businesses, responsibility for technology issues invariably falls to the CFO.

The experience of Simeon Wright, CFO of Dystance NZ Ltd, sums up common practice in smaller enterprises. *“We don’t have a CIO, but yesterday at the board meeting, that finger was pointed at me”*.

Zeacom Ltd is another such company, reports CFO David Ingram, and is *“probably typical for a small to medium-sized organisation”*.

David Alley, GM - Finance and Corporate Services at Competenz, has had similar experience. In his current role, he is responsible for the IT function, but in an earlier CFO role in a larger organisation, both he and the CIO reported directly to the CEO, bringing different perspectives, insights and specialities to the table. *“I think we’d love to have the luxury of a CIO on the executive table but I think for the small and medium-sized businesses in terms of cost, it’s difficult”*.

In those enterprises where CIOs report to CFOs, the success depends largely on the relationship between the two individuals, and even between the two departments. Pieter Bakker, Ports of Auckland CIO, came into his role nine months ago to help develop the IT function, which previously reported to the chief operating officer. Now, as CIO, he reports to the CFO but – as described by several roundtable participants – the CFO’s job description reads *“more like a portfolio role”*, with responsibility for functions as diverse as corporate affairs, finance and IT. Each of those functions has its own head, with each on an equal footing.

In another unusual twist, for a short period the finance function at Excell Corporation reported through the CIO, as the CEO regarded finance as a function that simply produced the accounts, while technology was integral to every aspect of the business. That has since changed as the role of finance is seen to be much broader than simply producing the accounts.

One of the major downsides of a structure where the CIO reports through the CFO is the lack of a direct technology voice at the executive table, able to expertly relay the issues and implications of alternative courses of action directly to the board.

Judith McKay, General Manager of Finance & Resources at AUT University has experienced both, a previous restructuring has seen the disestablishing of the role of director of information technology, and moving the the senior technology role to middle management. *“I’ve actually found that not to be as satisfactory ... it really was helpful to have somebody there who really had a finger on how things were changing”*.

In his role on the audit committee of Crown Research Institute Hort Research, Excell’s Mark Benjamin has also experienced the difficulties arising when technology issues are relayed through the CFO. Because of the unsatisfactory nature of receiving information and having questions answered second-hand, the board now asks for the CIO to attend meetings directly once or twice a year.

No matter what the reporting relationship between CFO and CIO, no matter what the structure under which finance and technology operate, the key to a productive and harmonious relationship lies in IT treating finance, like every other department, as a customer with needs to met.

“The CFO is a very busy person, as businesses become more sophisticated and more complex. So the responsibility really has to be shared ... from a CFO perspective it makes a lot of sense to split that.”

Simeon Wright, CFO, Dystance NZ Limited

“Having a CIO at executive level means they actually know how everything is working across the company, and how one thing will affect another. That doesn’t happen if the senior IT person is just at middle management level.”

Judith McKay, GM – Finance & Resources, AUT University

“We treat finance as a customer of ours, not through distinct reporting lines. We take it upon ourselves to deliver their requirements. I think we get a lot of respect from the accountants, from the CFO in respect of us getting our job done.”

Martyn Seddon, GM – Information Systems, Turners & Growers Limited



Simeon Wright
CFO
Dystance NZ Limited



David Alley
GM – Finance and Corporate Services
Competenz



Judith McKay
GM – Finance & Resources
AUT University



Martyn Seddon
GM – Information Systems
Turners & Growers Limited



David Ingram
CFO
Zeacom Limited

The relationship between IT and business and financial strategy

As business technology evolved over the later half of last century, finance was 'the first cab off the rank' – the first function to be computerised – and the benefits were obvious.

"It meant that you no longer have 25 accounts payable staff processing things as they did when I first started, and your financial people are now more able to concentrate on management accounting. I think technology's just taken away that whole transactions exercise."

Judith McKay, GM – Finance & Resources, AUT University

As a result, many finance and accounting staff became highly IT-literate. Having worked on one technology-related finance project, they became more and more involved in IT, never becoming technical specialists but performing a vital role as the interface between finance and technology.

Many chartered accountants drawn into technology in this way have now found themselves in the position of business analyst or project manager – translating between the needs of the two functions. But while they may be highly valued in their existing roles, some businesses and employers have difficulty understanding their special skill set, viewing them as neither one thing nor another.

And yet, these are the very people able to bridge the common communication and technical gap between the two functions, with skills and knowledge that cross the IT-finance divide. As Pieter Bakker of Ports of Auckland says, *"In a BA-type role I tend to actually look for those kinds of skills"*.

As technology has advanced, it has increasingly underpinned all areas of the business and finance is no longer its sole – or even major – customer. Increasingly, enterprise systems are commissioned on the basis of their suitability for operations, with finance needs being a secondary consideration.

However, because enterprise systems have to perform for every function and department, the business case will often dictate that the technology needs of other functions, such as operations, take precedence over the technology needs of finance.

When this occurs, it is the CFO's task to explain the business case to staff and to continue motivating them to achieve as much as possible with the tools at their disposal.

"The guys who sit between aren't really technical, they're just really switched on, really IT savvy. A lot of these guys come from finance backgrounds, or even from operations, so they really understand the business, they've just been exposed to technology."

Steve McGowan, Division Manager, Robert Half Technology

"Technology is so ubiquitous, that finance is just to one side – it covers everything, and the operations are the most important function."

Judith McKay, GM - Finance & Resources, AUT University

"My financial accounting manager complains to me regularly, he says 'I want a new accounting system', I say 'no'. It's not a priority for the business and finance aren't the key users. If someone's unhappy because they've got difficult accounting systems to work with, I would say what's their manager doing to deal with that motivation issue?"

Mark Benjamin, CFO, Excell Corporation



Pieter Bakker
CIO
Ports of Auckland Limited



Steve McGowan
Division Manager
Robert Half Technology



Megan Alexander
Senior Manager
Robert Half International



Kelvin Wong
CFO
NZ Institute of Chartered Accountants

Part B: The future

IT developments in the next five years and the implications for finance and accounting

In the late 1990s, businesses globally upgraded their IT systems in preparation for Y2K. It was an unusual situation – the business case was obvious, little further justification was needed and the upgrade was universal.

Businesses generally expect a seven to eight year life from their technology, meaning most of those systems need to be replaced. But there is no longer an urgent, pressing need for upgrade, so many businesses are continuing to 'muddle through' with what they already have.

The banking and insurance industries are perhaps the most extreme example of the problem, with figures of up to \$1 billion being put on the cost of a company-wide upgrade, which will affect every function within the business.

Pieter Bakker, whose previous role was with the ASB, outlined the problem. *"It's a daunting task, it's a very high-risk project and it's very difficult to do in stages. So when you decide to change over your core banking solution, you are changing the 'heart and lungs' of your organisation, the core of your systems. It is a momentous event that will happen at one point in time. It's a big, risky venture which has the potential to be a career breaker for C-level executives if it doesn't go well"*.

While the challenge for other industries is not quite as large, it does exist. The difficulty for IT and finance is in making the business case for an upgrade, when the business is continuing to function on the old system.

However, the benefits for those that do change are significant, with today's systems able to do much more complex tasks, much more quickly. Added to this, the generation now entering the workforce, and the generations to come, are 'digital natives'. Unlike their 'digital migrant' predecessors, they have grown up with technology, their ability to use and manipulate it is innate, they expect more of it and regard technical literacy as a core skill.

"Many candidates want to work for organisations with IT systems that don't hinder their ability to provide value-added information. They want time for analysis and forecasting rather than processing. Now we are seeing employers seeking these lateral skills in candidates which is bringing a fundamental change to the accounting and finance profession."

Megan Alexander, Senior Manager, Robert Half International

Finance professionals will be less called upon to analyse figures from the past, as software does this for them. Instead, their task will be to manipulate those figures to show future possibilities for the business – and then to translate them into easily understood presentations that other professionals, and boards, can understand.

"That allows you to take a future view, rather than trying to work out what happened in the past. T&G have about 12 analysts and they pull data from multiple systems and give you a result, rather than analysing what could happen if you did different things ... based on the information they've got on hand."

Martyn Seddon, GM – Information Systems, Turners & Growers Limited

"Part of the new focus for the finance team will be to ensure that the information is presented in the most readable and understandable format, whether that be tables or graphs or whatever."

Kelvin Wong, CFO, New Zealand Institute of Chartered Accountants

The New Zealand Institute of Chartered Accountants is aware of the role changes that have already occurred, and those still to come. It is already looking at changes to its qualifications to reflect the decreasing emphasis on reporting and the increasing emphasis on business analysis in the role of chartered accountancy. While the first change will, by necessity of regulation, involve audit qualifications, the interface between finance and IT – the increasing importance of the business analyst role – is likely to be a focus in the near future.

“As CFOs you sit there and try and write the justification [for an upgrade] and you know it always goes over time and over budget, and the business benefits are hard to quantify. I think that that’s the value that CIOs can bring – you get the broader view, where are the efficiencies and gains and how are we going to provide a better service or product to our customers, because that’s what boards are going to want to see.”

Mark Benjamin, CFO, Excell Corporation

“I think executives have to take a step and say ‘we’ve got to go forward’, and if you can get those technologies in and can afford to do that, then you do create the ability for your staff to have thinking space and time to do other things which create value. That’s something that we can’t lose sight of – that we need to create thinking space for our people.”

Simeon Wright, CFO, Dystance NZ Limited

“I’m kind of looking for the Facebook for accounting, so that when someone pays us on the invoice we don’t see it again ... I’m looking for the big step in technology helping finance.”

Kelvin Wong, CFO, New Zealand Institute of Chartered Accountants

“Changes in reporting mean a lot of chartered accountants will become redundant in the long-term future unless we evolve.”

Terry McLaughlin, CEO, New Zealand Institute of Chartered Accountants



The evolving career paths for IT and finance professionals

International statistics from market intelligence company IDC show a definite trend – in 1998 30% of CIOs reported to the CFO and 35% reported to the CEO. Now, just 10 years later, 70% report to the CEO and 5% to the CFO.

This trend can only continue and will become more evident in New Zealand, because of the importance of technology to business. It is no longer simply a tool to automate finance – it is an integral part of business and technology decisions that affect every aspect of an enterprise.

The increasing promotion of the CIO role is highlighting the difference between an IT manager and a CIO – which is much the same as the difference between a chief accountant and a CFO. Instead of focusing narrowly on their speciality, whether it be technology or finance, incumbents in either role need to take a broad, enterprise-wide view. Their role is to interpret and apply their speciality for the overall benefit of the business.

This brings a challenge for the IT industry – to grow technology specialists who are also business specialists, who understand more than just the workings of IT but also understand how that IT relates to and affects the business.

For finance professionals, learning to understand the business happens naturally. Their role fundamentally focuses on profit and loss – the *raison d'être* of any business – and so they naturally have a business view.

IT professionals, however, start out by focusing on IT – exposure to the business view happens much later in their career path. IT is also a much younger industry, still lacking the over-arching professional organisation and career development of finance and accounting.

However, both industries face a similar problem – not every technical specialist wishes to be promoted to CIO or CFO level where they must, of necessity, take a generalist’s view. One answer, for both industries, is to develop dual career paths – one leading to technical speciality, with remuneration that genuinely rewards individuals for their true benefit to the business, the other leading down a generalist management track.

This is already happening in finance in the United States, where many businesses now accept that the CFO doesn’t need to understand the ‘nuts and bolts’ of every aspect of accounting, but can be a generalist. As the Institute’s Kelvin Wong says of CFOs, *“If you’re a strong financial controller, a strong HR manager and a strong IT manager, then you can be a generalist”*.

The same change in emphasis is vital as CIOs increasingly take their place at the top executive table – rather than looking for technical specialists to fill the role, businesses will increasingly look for generalists who have a business focus.

Herein lies another challenge, this time for the education sector: to encourage more IT students to take a business focus, combining business and technology in their qualifications. Although some institutions, such as AUT University, do offer conjoint finance and technology degrees, the combination is not yet popular. As the successive generations of digital natives reach tertiary education, this is likely to change.

“The jump from IT manager to CIO is the same as the jump from chief accountant to CFO – it’s all about strategy and people and direction of the business rather than about debits and credits or bits and bytes. That’s the gulf.”

Kelvin Wong, CFO, New Zealand Institute of Chartered Accountants

“To really participate at the executive table and the board table, you really need to speak the language of business, you really need to understand the business ... being able to participate at an equal level in terms of business strategy development.”

Pieter Bakker, CIO, Ports of Auckland

“Does a CIO need to have a technical ability? I don’t think they do at all. I think the CIO role is strategic, that is why you have the technical people in the background, you throw that technical problem back there, they’ll make it happen. It’s just that high-level view you have and trust the people to make it happen.”

Martyn Seddon, GM – Information Systems, Turners & Growers Limited

How will IT, finance and accounting affect future business strategy?

In order to get the best value from IT, businesses have to change from seeing it as a discrete function to an integral part of every aspect of their enterprise. Only when the business as a whole takes true ownership of IT decisions, rather than seeing them as the responsibility of the IT department, will they understand the business case for technology changes and allocate the resources necessary to make them happen in a timely manner.

“SAP implementation is not an IT strategy, it’s not an IT directive, it should be owned by the business,” says Martyn Seddon, GM – Information Systems, Turners & Growers Limited. “Where the business actually takes ownership, gets involved and drives the project, we don’t get over budget, we don’t take too long, it’s their money.”

The increasingly technologically literate workforce of the future will speed that integration of IT awareness into every aspect of business – and improve strategic decision-making around technology.

“Strategy development is all about having the right processes in place to get the right minds together to come up with the right strategies. That’s a multi-disciplinary approach. Having more technology-savvy people around the top table has real potential for higher quality decision-making.”

Pieter Bakker, CIO, Ports of Auckland

Likewise, the impact of faster access to more accurate information will allow better financial decisions to be made more quickly.

“In terms of finance, the trade-off between timeliness and accuracy will get smaller, because the information gets more real time. But the information technology becomes important across the whole business, and finance is just one of the customers. Hopefully IT will get to the point where it’s not just focused on the business, but its focused on the business’s customers and how it will deliver value to them.”

Mark Benjamin, CFO, Excell Corporation

“New Zealand’s single biggest economic problem is labour market productivity and the solution is education and technology, so it’s vital really. That’s the only thing that’s going to get us up the OECD rankings.”

Terry McLaughlin, CEO, New Zealand Institute of Chartered Accountants



Mark Benjamin
CFO
Excell Corporation



Terry McLaughlin
CEO
NZ Institute of Chartered Accountants

Biographies

Megan Alexander
Senior Manager
Robert Half International



Prior to joining Robert Half in 2004, Megan Alexander had a variety of roles in the accounting industry. She began her career in 1996 with KPMG where she obtained her CA qualification whilst working in the business advisory division and gaining international experience through a secondment to the UK. Megan left KPMG to gain overseas experience and spent just under four years based in London. Combined with extensive travel, Megan worked in various contract positions including Management Accountant, Project Accountant and Finance Manager. Megan returned to New Zealand and spent a further 18 months in a permanent role as Group Accountant for Gough, Gough & Hamer Ltd before the transition into recruitment. Having been both a candidate and a client in the accounting job market, Megan’s own experiences meant an obvious choice of specialising in the placement of accounting and finance professionals. In 2007, Megan was promoted to the role of Senior Manager and now oversees both the finance and technology recruitment divisions.

David Alley

General Manager, Finance and Corporate Services
Competenz



David Alley is the General Manager, Finance and Corporate Services for Competenz (New Zealand Engineering Food and Manufacturing Industry Training Organisation Inc.). Competenz provides educational and training services to a diverse range of industries and works to lift the level of competitiveness of New Zealand industry through workplace training. There are currently in excess of 13,000 trainees and apprentices undertaking training programs across the country. David is a CPA and is currently responsible for a broad range of corporate services including finance, IT and procurement.

David recently moved to New Zealand after working for over 15 years in the South Australian health sector in a variety of senior financial management roles within various organisations and has also worked in the South Australian Treasury Department.

Pieter Bakker
Chief Information Officer
Ports of Auckland



Pieter has over 22 years of IT experience, having progressed from Analyst/Programmer to General Manager level with leading New Zealand corporates such as Zespri international, Air New Zealand, ASB and most recently Ports of Auckland Ltd. Pieter holds a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) from Massey University, majoring in computer science and a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from the University of Auckland. Particularly in Air New Zealand and ASB, Pieter has held roles leading technology strategy development as well roles leading technology solutions delivery, leading teams from 20 through to 80 IT staff. He has been involved in many large implementation projects including an SAP implementation, data warehousing, voiceover IP and many other systems rationalisation and IT improvement projects.

Mark Benjamin
Chief Financial Officer
Excell Corporation



Mark is the Chief Financial Officer of Excell Corporation Limited. He has previously held senior financial and operational management roles within the agricultural industry, and prior to that worked at Price Waterhouse internationally. In addition he is a director of Terracare Limited, The Horticultural and Food Research Institute of New Zealand Limited and the Auckland Regional Transport Authority. He also provides consulting services to other small and start-up businesses.

David Ingram
Chief Financial Officer
Zeacom Limited



David Ingram is Chief Financial Officer of Zeacom, a unified communications software company. He is responsible for financial operations and information technology for the company which has offices in Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom and the United States. David joined Zeacom in November 1999 as Financial Controller. In February 2005 he was promoted to Chief Financial Officer. A qualified Chartered Accountant, David has a broad range of industry experience in both New Zealand and the United Kingdom. David is a member of the New Zealand Institute of Chartered Accountants and holds a Bachelor of Management Studies degree from the University of Waikato.

Judith Ann McKay
General Manager- Finance & Resources
AUT University



Judith McKay is General Manager – Finance & Resources at AUT University. She has degrees in economics and commerce and is a Chartered Accountant. Judith has been with AUT University since 1994 during which time the University has doubled its student numbers, trebled its income and increased net assets by a factor of eight. Prior to AUT, Judith held various senior finance and administration roles for a Trans-Tasman shipping company and several manufacturing companies. She has been an auditor at Price Waterhouse and a COBOL programmer. Judith has a keen interest in sports administration and is a Board member of the New Zealand Academy of Sport (North).

Steve McGowan
Division Manager
Robert Half Technology



Steve McGowan is Division Manager of Robert Half’s specialist IT recruitment division in Auckland, Robert Half Technology. Steve previously worked as Auckland manager for a leading IT recruitment specialist, where he developed a book of business from scratch and built up a team of seven consultants. Prior to that, Steve worked for a finance company in account management and advisor roles. As manager of Robert Half Technology in Auckland, he has built a strong client and candidate base. He recruits for a wide range of technology roles across many different industries and sectors in the Auckland market.

Terry McLaughlin
Chief Executive Officer
New Zealand Institute of Chartered Accountants



Terry has been the Executive Director of Audit New Zealand, the operating arm of the Office of the Controller and Auditor-General (OAG), since April 2004, and leads approximately 200 staff located across New Zealand. He has been with the OAG for nearly ten years, previously as an Assistant Auditor-General in the Parliamentary Group and Director Quality Assurance. Prior to that, Terry had six years’ experience working for Ernst & Young in both New Zealand and the United Kingdom. He is a qualified Chartered Accountant with a Bachelor of Commerce in Accountancy from the University of Canterbury.

Terry has had a long involvement with the New Zealand Institute of Chartered Accountants. He received his Fellowship for service to the Institute and the profession, and excellence and high achievement in his career which reflects positively on the profession, in October 2007. Terry was a member of the Professional Standards Board from 1998 to 2005, latterly as the deputy chair, and is a past member of the National Professional Development Committee and the Wellington Public Sector Committee. He has been a member of the Institute’s Executive Board since 2006.

Martyn Seddon
General Manager – Information Systems
Turners & Growers Limited



Martyn is the General Manager of Information Systems at Turners & Growers Limited. In his role, his main priority is to implement SAP throughout the organisation to provide a single transactional backbone.

Martyn sees his role as having a visionary rather than a day-to-day focus and his aim is to enhance the business by providing efficiencies and productivity gains through the use of technology.

Martyn has worked across many industries including oil, banking, manufacturing, auctioning and logistics and has held positions from application development and engineering through to architect and team/project management.

Kelvin Wong
Chief Financial Officer
New Zealand Institute of Chartered Accountants



Kelvin has worked at the Institute for three years and has been Chief Financial Officer for the last two years. As well as managing the Institute’s financial affairs, Kelvin is also responsible for the Institute’s Information and Communication Technology section and is a member of the Executive Management team.

Prior to this, Kelvin held management positions in internal audit, treasury risk management and treasury and structured deals accounting over 10 years with the ANZ Bank in Wellington. Kelvin trained with accountancy firm Deloitte Haskins & Sells and worked the traditional path of audit junior to audit manager during a five-year period in Wellington and London. His five-year stint in the UK was rounded off with three years of internal audit work with the satellite agency INMARSAT.

Simeon Wright
Chief Financial Officer
Dystance NZ Ltd



Simeon Wright is Director of Finance for Dystance New Zealand Limited and Chief Financial Officer of associated companies RHE & Associates, RHE Infrastructure, Realsports International, Virtual Spectator International, and Idiomi.

He has over 13 year of business experience the last 10 years of which have been on international assignments both in the UK and New Zealand. Before joining Dystance in July 2008, Simeon was Global Finance Director for the commercial division of high growth company Navman, an international marine electronics and global positioning system (GPS) solution organisation and one of New Zealand’s most successful hi-tech exporters.

Simeon is a registered Chartered Accountant with the New Zealand Institute of Chartered Accountants and holds a bachelor of Business Management Studies from the University of Waikato in Accounting & Finance.

Robert Half pioneered specialised recruitment services and is the world's leader in the field today. Founded in 1948, the company is traded on the New York Stock Exchange and operates around the world placing highly qualified professionals on a temporary, permanent and project basis.

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