

15.568 – Practical Information Technology Management – Spring 2005

Class 25: Tuesday, May 10, 2005

Read:

Carr, N., "IT Doesn't Matter" HBR, March 2003

Review:

Weill, P. & Broadbent, M., "The Evidence for Business Value", Chap 3 in Leveraging the New Infrastructure: How Market Leaders Capitalize on Information Technology, HBS Press, 1998

"Make it simple: A survey of information technology" The Economist, October 30th, 2004

Over the past year and a half the question of the strategic value of IT for businesses has been a hot topic. Given the slow recovery of IT investments since the dotcom bust and the continuing decline in cost per unit of performance of processors, storage and telecommunications, some see IT approaching commodity status, available to all firms and offering competitive advantage to none. Others say commoditization of the elements of IT, even if true, does not translate to the commoditization of the *uses* of IT. The debate has settled in recent months, but the strong views on both sides have forced a fresh examination of the value of IT and how it should be organized and managed.

Come to class prepared to take a basic position for or against Carr's argument.