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Get An In-Depth Look at Managing a PC Fleet (Formerly titled “New Intel Project”) (338 words)

How much does it *really* cost to own and manage a fleet of personal computers? How much risk exists from business functions at the PC level? How do the new Sarbanes-Oxley requirements impact the PC environment?

Tough questions. But you’ll find the answers to these and other pressing concerns in a soon-to-be-published report from the Research Foundation titled **Financial Best Practices and Security: Managing a Fleet of Personal Computers**.

Based on a research project sponsored jointly with Intel Corporation, the report showcases best practices and provides hands-on guidance for financial and technology managers facing the increasingly complex challenge of managing a fleet of personal computers.

Intel actually initiated the project by approaching IIA with the idea and offering to fund the research. From an IT standpoint, Intel noticed that many companies still use older computers and older software, which might lead to a liability problem. How? Because once hardware and software manufacturers stop supporting older versions of their equipment and programs, customers lack up-to-date security and software patches, making it impossible to secure older computers.

“If your organization knows it’s got machines that are vulnerable, that may be called negligence,” explains Peter Kastner, Executive Vice President and Chief Research Officer of the Aberdeen Group, a technology consulting firm.

Speaking at a recent technology forum to discuss this research project, Kastner also emphasized that older PCs actually cost more to operate.

“The optimal desktop lifecycle is three years, which corresponds with the duration of a standard warranty,” says Kastner.

Fortunately, **Financial Best Practices and Security** covers a broad scope of PC fleet management issues. The report focuses on business risk assessment and insurance, compliance and regulatory, information security and appropriate use, operations and business continuity, software management and currency and total cost of ownership and finance. Using the COSO and SAC models, the report leans heavily on case studies that

highlight improved control framework and cost-reduction measures for better decision-making and assurance.

Look for this new research publication to be available (both in print and online) in early 2004.

New Publication Focuses on Sarbanes-Oxley (295 words, not including book title/author/price info at top of article)

Internal Audit's Role in Corporate Governance: Sarbanes-Oxley Compliance

by James Roth, Ph.D., CIA, CCSA, and Donald Espersen, CIA, CBA

XXX pages, order number 473

IIA member price US \$25; nonmember price US \$30

Sarbanes-Oxley Act: threat or opportunity?

According to a new research report titled **Internal Audit's Role in Corporate Governance: Sarbanes-Oxley Compliance**, the new federal requirements present a unique and powerful opportunity for internal auditors. While the Act does create a short-term compliance burden, it will help restore investor confidence in the reliability of financial reports. In the long term, this may improve risk management and, ultimately, enhance shareholder value.

“Internal auditors are playing leading roles in helping their companies meet the challenging provisions and tight deadlines of the Act,” says James Roth, co-author of the report.

Generously funded by donations (see related article on page X), the report primarily focuses on what internal auditors are doing to help their companies comply with Sarbanes-Oxley. From successfully meeting the challenges of COSO to using a two-tiered self-assessment approach, internal auditors are leading the way through the complex Sarbanes-Oxley maze. The study also addresses issues such as balancing the conflicting needs of audit committees and management, and finding the resources to do more with governance.

To whet your appetite, here's a sample of what you can expect to find in this report:

- Control evaluation tools that provide excellent models of entity-wide and activity-level techniques
- Emerging principles and practices in Section 302 and 404 implementation guides
- Sample Disclosure Committee charter
- Implementation guide for whistleblower programs
- Audit Committee charter issues matrix
- Updated Audit Committee charter

“In our research, we were happy to see the direction Sarbanes-Oxley compliance is taking,” says Roth. “We hoped audit committees would realize that their greatest need is objective information about the organization’s ethical climate and other aspects of the control environment, and that internal auditors are in the best position to give them that information. This seems to be happening.”

About Our Foundation (127 words)

The Research Foundation is the recognized leader in sponsoring and disseminating research to assist and guide internal auditing professionals, business and government communities, and the general public in the areas of audit practices, risk management, controls, and governance.

Founded by The Institute of Internal Auditors in 1976, The Foundation has set the standard for professional achievement in the internal auditing profession.

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