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**‘INFORMATION SECURITY MANAGEMENT’
IS TOP TECH ISSUE FOR 7th YEAR IN A ROW**

AICPA Technology Survey Shows Protecting Data is the Highest Priority

New York, NY (Jan. 12, 2009) – For the seventh consecutive year, “Information Security Management” is the most important issue affecting IT strategy, investment and implementation in the coming 12 to 18 months for businesses according to the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants’ 20th Annual Top Technology Initiatives Survey.

“The survey showed conclusively that protecting the data an organization is entrusted to manage is of the utmost importance,” said David M. Cieslak, CPA, CITP, GSEC, co-chairman of the Top Technology Initiatives Task Force and principal of Arxis Technology, Inc. “Much of the data collected is personal information, so it is critical that organizations proactively prevent its loss or misuse.”

Underscoring the importance of security, “Privacy Management” moved up the list from fourth to second place in this year’s survey. Over the past year, a proliferation of state-sponsored legislation was passed to protect personal identification information. Organizations are subject to fines if they are found guilty of not mitigating the vulnerabilities to access of this data.

Increased concern over data protection also led respondents to cite “Secure Data File Storage, Transmission, and Exchange” as the third most-important issue in the upcoming year, the first time this has appeared on the list.

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“Training and Competency” rose from number 13 to 6, as managers seek to train staff in order to fully integrate new technologies into their organizations for maximum efficiency and to help boost employee confidence and retain staff.

The Top 10 most important technology initiatives for 2009 are as follows:

1. Information Security Management
2. Privacy Management
3. Secure Data File Storage, Transmission and Exchange
4. Business Process Improvement, Workflow, and Process Exceptions Alerts
5. Mobile and Remote Computing
6. Training and Competency
7. Identity and Access Management
8. Improved Application and Data Integration
9. Document, Forms and Content Knowledge Management
10. Electronic Data Retention Strategy

A complete list of definitions and additional information is available at www.aicpa.org/toptech.

Methodology

The survey was conducted between Nov. 11 and Dec. 5 under the supervision of a task force co-chaired by Cieslak and Mary R. MacBain, CPA, CITP. A select group of 732 finance, accounting and technology participants ranked 33 technology initiatives they thought would have the most significant impact on their organizations in the next 12 to 18 months.

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