

## Five Technology Imperatives for the Next President

Five thousand years ago Mesopotamian leaders had one thing on their minds: the wheel.

This emerging technology promised to change their world, much as the discovery of fire had revolutionized society 400,000 years earlier.

The next president will face a similar game-changing scenario. The evolution of technology in the coming years likely will chart the course of human progress for centuries to come. Tremendous tides rush around us; someone will have to steer.

Here are five technology imperatives for the next president.

### Opening the Borders to IT Talent

For the tech community, immigration policy is a burning priority. Some argue government's zeal to limit new arrivals to the United States could hobble development and commercialization of important technologies.

The nonpartisan National Foundation for American Policy reports that immigrants have started nearly half of America's top 50 venture-funded companies and are members of management or product development teams at more than 75 percent of leading companies.

In April, after spearheading the Jump-Start Our Business Startups Act, AOL co-founder Steve Case joined other IT leaders in calling for legislation that would allow companies to recruit highly skilled immigrants.

The tech industry has long struggled to find the talent it needs. "Traditionally, the void has been filled with immigrants, who possess 67 percent of doctoral degrees in the United States," says Darren Hayes, a professor at Pace University's Seidenberg School of Computer Science and Information Systems. "A tightening of immigration laws would stifle the needs of IT employers."

Immigration reform is a hot-button issue that has met stiff resistance and political gridlock. Presidential leadership could drive new policy and help propel legislation that IT advocates say industry needs.

### Securing the Supply Chain

Technology has taught government and industry to fret admirably about the possibility of malfeasance in critical networks. Security managers wring their hands daily, planning for the next scenario and asking who might break in and what might they steal or compromise.

Much has been done to keep the bad actors out. But sometimes they work from within.

There is a very real possibility that some network components are compromised before they are ever installed. “What clandestine espionage functions are baked into network components at the manufacturing and distribution levels?” says retired Navy Rear Adm. Jamie Barnett, senior vice president at the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies.

Most network equipment in the United States comes from abroad, much of it from China. “For instance, [Chinese firm] Huawei dominates the undersea cable market, and in excess of 90 percent of America’s international communications, including the Internet, is carried on undersea cables,” Barnett notes.

The supply chain is insecure without a standard process of checking for malicious components inserted into the pipeline. As an under-the-radar threat, supply chain vulnerabilities face little resistance from those who are looking along the perimeter when they build their defenses.

No laws or regulations exist to address the potential threat, Barnett says. Leadership at the presidential level could put the issue into play and perhaps lead to legislation that would bolster governance over the import and deployment of critical infrastructure components.

## **Thinking Big - Data**

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