

**Preparation Sheet for MI 703 Computer Information Systems
Session #13, April 25, 2007: Course Wrap**

Session Overview

The first hour of this class will center on an analysis of the article by Nicholas Carr, “IT Doesn’t Matter”. We will also discuss the Final Exam and have a course review.

As you might imagine, the Nicholas Carr article “IT Doesn’t Matter” set off a bombshell in the IT field when it was published in May of 2003. Much of what Carr said had been said before, but never had all these arguments been put together in quite this way in so prominent a venue as the *Harvard Business Review*. Also, the article appeared at a time—near the depth of the dot.com bust—where it’s themes had a particular resonance with many managers.

Carr presents a wide variety of arguments to support his thesis that IT has reached the point where it has largely lost its strategic relevance. As a result, he argues that most corporations should take a defensive posture towards IT.

As you read this article, there are numerous key concepts from our prior sessions that relate to Carr’s arguments. Thus, our analysis of this article gives an excellent opportunity to revisit and put together many key themes from the course.

Most of our discussion will be in the form of a debate. I will be putting some debate questions on the board, and asking the class to take sides

Required Readings and Study Questions

1. **IT Doesn’t Matter**, Nicholas Carr, HBR, 2003 (Coursepack).

- **Central Challenge:** What is the strategic relevance of IT today, and how is it changing?
- **Preparation Questions:**
 - Carr argues that IT has largely lost its strategic relevance. To what extent do you agree with this general thesis?
 - What key arguments and observations does Carr present in support of this thesis? Do you agree or disagree with these arguments/observations? Why or why not?
 - Has Carr left out anything important in constructing his thesis? If so, what?
 - What conclusion does Carr reach for how IT should be managed? Do you agree with these conclusions?