

Launching CIONet.com

CIONet.com is the first independent online business network for CIO's & ICT-managers.

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Our current Knowledge Economy is transforming rapidly into a Networking Economy, where 'who you know' is at least as important as 'what you know'. Online business networks are a fast growing, new way for business people to develop and manage their network. Open online business networks such as LinkedIn, OpenBC and Ecademy are very successful in facilitating entrepreneurs and middle managers in their networking needs, but they don't cater for the CIO's and ICT managers of large and mid-size companies that have a need to connect with their peers.

CIONet (www.cionet.com) is the first independent, private and invitation-only online business network that empowers CIOs & ICT Managers to network more efficiently and effectively for business. CIONet is all about Building Relationships, Sharing Knowledge & Growing a Peer Network in the CIO community.

CIONet.com is an initiative of Close Partners and is supported by the CIONet Belgium Advisory Board that includes the following members: Carl Tilkin Franssens, CIO KBC; Edwin D'Hondt, CIO Umicore & Chairman CIO Forum; Luc Verhelst, Chairman MIT-club; Giovanni Palmieri, CIO NMBS; Michel Slongers, CIO Carrefour; Miel Schamp, CIO Barco; Prof. Carlos De Backer, Antwerp University; Prof. Jacques Tiberghien, ULB and Peter Hinssen, Trend watcher.

"Networking is a fundamental part of every CIO and ICT-manager's job" says Carl Tilkin-Franssens, CIO of KBC and president of the advisory board of CIONet in Belgium. "Today, innovation and growth are no longer possible without knowledge sharing and cooperation between different companies."

"Online networking completely changes the way business people connect with each other to exchange information and experiences", adds Hendrik Deckers, founder of CIONet.com. "I believe that the impact that online business networks are having on networking can be compared to the way e-mail has revolutionised professional and personal communication."

CIONet is a 'network of networks' platform that welcomes all existing and new CIO & ICT-management clubs, initiatives, organisations and networks to use CIONet.com as their open or private online business network. Today CIO Forum and ID-bates start using CIONet.com. CIONet is an independent network where 95% of the members are CIO's, ICT-managers, academici and industry experts. CIONet is supported by business partners such as Mercury en Netapp.

In addition to the online network platform, where members can quickly and with a low threshold contact each other to exchange knowledge and experiences and discuss CIO & ICT- management topics, CIONet will also organise in 2006 a series of specific events where CIONet members can meet in person to start building strong relationships and exchange ideas.

2006 is the first (net)workyear for CIONet. The network will first be launched in Belgium, where we estimate that around 500 people are part of the target community. For 2007 an international roll-out is planned.

About Close Partners

Close Partners (www.closepartners.com) is a European network of business development specialists, active in sales and marketing projects for the ICT world. In 2004 Close Partners launched the Ecademy Benelux Trusted Network (<http://benelux.ecademy.com>), the popular online business network for entrepreneurs, that has seen a growth in 18 months from 150 to more than 2000 members.

*for more information please contact:
Hendrik Deckers, Manager CIONet.com
T: +32 15 26 16 00
E: hendrik.deckers@cionet.com*