



Oxfordshire Branch

## Is IT a Profession?

### A debate with Adam Thilthorpe, BCS Director for Professionalism

IT often assumes the role of a servant but IT doesn't just support business, it powers business. Adam poses the question "Has the IT profession come of age and is it seen as equivalent to the other professions represented in Boardrooms?"

Points for debate include:

- Many businesses do not expect professional qualifications from IT practitioners; picking up skills on the job is not unusual, just as many builders do. Why would we want to change this?
- Lawyers and Accountants cannot practice unless they have the appropriate qualifications and are members of their professional bodies. Would this ever be practical for IT?
- Members of many professions are legally liable for what they do and the advice that they provide. If this was applied to IT, would it make IT projects more successful?
- A Computer is a tool, and as such Computing is a "service" rather than a professional discipline per se. Professions are often defined by a problem domain, rather than the tools used to support that domain. Therefore lawyers, accountants, scientists etc are the real professionals, who use the computer as a tool and hence require the services of "technicians" to support their work.

Although questions will be taken on the night, in the best traditions of BBC's Question Time we are asking you to send pre-prepared questions to help seed the debate. Please take some time, and let us have your questions in advance. Please e-mail questions to: [bcs-oxfordshire@googlegroups.com](mailto:bcs-oxfordshire@googlegroups.com)

Come along, join in the debate and hear what the industry thinks about this issue and what is being done to support the profession.

### Adam Thilthorpe

Adam Thilthorpe joined BCS in 2005 after a period working in the City of London at institutions such as JP Morgan Chase and Georgeson Shareholder.

As BCS Director for Professionalism, Adam is involved principally in developing the Institute's strategic initiative to raise professionalism in IT and especially in work to engage with employers of IT professionals to increase professionalism in the industry. He speaks regularly at conferences, and other events, to promote the IT profession and develop corporate relationships to achieve these aims.