

# **Security and Privacy – Business Dilemma or Opportunity?**

**A Content Overview of the Alumni Panel, October 4, 2003**

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The panelists concluded that the current security and privacy issues provided both a dilemma and an opportunity, for business and government. There was unanimous agreement that information technology was both in part the cause of the problem, and most certainly part of the solution presented by this thorny issue. The major conclusions of the panel were:

- Government and business must work together to address both national and corporate security and individual and corporate privacy – uncoordinated responses by one or the other will result in either insufficient security or a stifling of business efficiency and personal privacy;
- The problem is not just a national problem – given the information intensive outsourcing of U.S. firms and the remarkable volume of international shipping that comes in and out of this country, it is an international problem that requires an international governmental and private sector response;
- A heavy-handed or uninformed government response to security concerns, especially in the arena of logistics transportation (shipping and railroads in particular), could cripple the U.S., and by extension, world economy;
- An informed implementation of information technology into the physical logistics world can be accomplished in partnership, providing efficiency and supply-chain visibility for industry, and security for the government – both outcomes are in the interests of individuals;
- Regarding consumer privacy, a delicate balance is needed. While in some cases legal requirements may need to be tightened to prevent the selling of consumer data, in many cases it would just be good business on the part of corporations to give their customers an opportunity to identify their desired interactions and then operate accordingly – the technology to enable this is available;
- One does not have to give up privacy to attain security – in fact, just the opposite – maintaining and honoring privacy is crucial to attaining better security. As long as companies and individuals fear that government will not maintain the confidentiality of data or vulnerabilities they share with it, the ability to create a coherent joint response is undermined.