

July 09, 2007 (Computerworld) --

Name: Gene Kim

Title: CTO and founder

Organization: Tripwire Inc.

Age: 35

Industry: IT/computer services

30-second biography: Back in 1992, while a student at Purdue University, Kim, along with Gene Spafford, co-authored Tripwire, configuration audit and control software that's now used by more than 5,500 organizations worldwide. In 2004 he co-founded the IT Process Institute, an organization dedicated to researching, benchmarking and developing prescriptive guidance for IT operations, security management and auditors. That same year, Kim co-authored *Visible Ops Handbook: Implementing ITIL in Four Practical and Auditable Steps*, which has since sold more than 75,000 copies. He currently serves on the Advanced Technology Committee for the Institute of Internal Auditors and was recently given the Outstanding Alumnus Award by the Department of Computer Sciences at Purdue University for achievement and leadership in the profession.

Current project: "As a co-founder of the IT Process Institute, I am collaborating with researchers from Carnegie Mellon University and the Institute of Internal Auditors on projects to advance the quantitative science around the management of IT operations and security. The goal is to create guidance that can help management focus on what really matters to business performance, and test that guidance with the same empirical rigor that pharmaceuticals use for conducting drug trials."

Who in the technology industry most influenced your career? "The three leaders of the manufacturing movement during the 1980s: W. Edwards Deming, Eliyahu M. Goldratt and the lean manufacturing researchers. These pioneers were able to create an industrywide business imperative to increase productivity and quality in manufacturing."

Most-critical technologies for IT this year: "The vast majority of IT organizations realize that they can't simultaneously deliver their committed projects on time while delivering reliable IT service. Consequently, committed project loads are cut, and IT finds itself firefighting, spending significant time on unplanned work and struggling again to deliver on their project commitments. What we need now is the decision science of how we make good, informed decisions about how to manage technology to get the business what it needs, deliver on those commitments and make sure it is always working when it should."

The best thing about today's technology: "It's so inexpensive."

The worst thing about today's technology: "The reality is that most organizations aren't capable of realizing the benefits of it."

Technology can... "Create unbelievable competitive advantage when managed well; however, when not managed well, technology can generate more valueless work and create large and totally unforeseen liabilities that jeopardize the business."

Book that was most recently on your nightstand: *Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea*, by Charles Seife

What sets you apart? "My personal goal is to help create the conditions that will enable an IT management movement like we saw in manufacturing in the 1980s. I hope the work we are doing is helping to advance those objectives."