

## A Collaborative Approach

Over the past few weeks we have learned a lot about IoT and how it can make our lives better. Today we would turn our attention on another aspect of IoT by taking a look at the need for **a collaborative approach**.

The word collaborate has Latin origins, like most of our English words. It comes from the words col (meaning 'together') and laborare (meaning 'to work'). This literal meaning is interesting because working together is not always true collaboration. Two departments in an organization can work for the same hours in the same building and produce work that is at odds. They work together, but are they collaborating? This is an important differentiation to make early in this discussion since, as we will see, key for the effective, safe and beneficial use of IOT is true collaboration among consumers, manufacturers, policy makers and ICT professionals.

IOT can provide big upsides for consumers and retailers. However as with most new tools learning about the proper use can keep users safe and in fact improve the efficiency of the tool's use. Let us look at an example of the importance of how important collaboration is in this space.

For our example we would use an internet enabled flowerpot. This device detects the moisture level of the soil and reminds the user to water the plant. It is important for the manufacturer to provide clear instructions for the installation and use of the flower-pot. It is also important that the device itself complies with the Online Trust Alliance Framework to ensure that the consumer and their network is protected.

The consumer for his part must also ensure that the device's instructions are followed (e.g. changing default log-in information). But here's the yorcker. What if our consumer takes her plant into the office and connects it there? In such a case she must ensure that the ICT professionals at her place of work are informed. Additional internet enabled devices increase the attack surface of any network, something that is more concerning for the enterprise environment, and may cause sleepless nights for the unaware network administrator.

It is also the responsibility of the Enterprise ICT professionals to be versed on the best practices for IOT deployment and, the Online Trust Alliance Framework. These professionals must ensure that their networks are ready to receive these devices since

these items are becoming more ubiquitous. Not only for the workplace, but also for our friends and family (we know the requests to configure this or that device will come).

From our example the need for collaboration in the deployment and proper use of IoT devices seems quite clear. If we all play our part IoT can play a key role in improving productivity and efficiency in a safe way. Let's start collaborating.