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ADDICTED TO DATA: GLOBAL AVANADE SURVEY REVEALS COMPANIES OVERWHELMED BY DATA BUT STILL WANT MORE

Data Deluge Driving IT Investments in Customer Relationship Management Software and Security Systems

Sydney, Australia – November 16, 2010 – [Avanade](#), a business technology services provider, today announced the results of its global survey, “The Business Impact of Big Data,” which examines executive attitudes about how enterprises are managing the exponential growth of data.

The survey, conducted by Kelton Research, reveals that companies are suffering so strongly from an overload of data; it is creating very real business challenges. Nearly two thirds (62 percent) of Australian C-level executives, IT decision makers and business unit leaders report they are overwhelmed by the amount of data their company manages.

Dubbing the data overload, “big data”, the research shows many executives report they are often delayed in making important decisions as a result of too much information. Fifty-eight percent of Australian respondents report they have made an inaccurate business decision as a result of bad or outdated data, with 46 percent of those surveyed stating that most data received has been inaccurate.

“A company’s data represents its relationship with its customers – their likes, dislikes, how they like to be connected to the organisation,” said Jeyan Jeevaratnam, Country Manager, Avanade Australia. “It is counter-intuitive that too much data is affecting business productivity and effectiveness, but that is what our survey has shown.

“Companies must develop a new data usage culture where executives, employees and strategic partners are active participants in managing a meaningful data lifecycle,” continued Jeevaratnam. “This will enable businesses to turn information from data into actionable, accurate business insights.”

Data Addiction

Despite the challenges created by the proliferation of data, executives report they want more data and they want it faster. One in three executives believe access to even more sources of data would enable them to do their job better, while nearly two thirds (67 percent) of Australian executives say they still want faster access to data. According to the survey, this desire for more data and need for speed is driven by the ability to keep up with customer service expectations. This is in line with companies taking on a more customer-centric business model.

“Our research confirms that while speed of access to data is important, understanding the full scope and context of the data is equally as important, particularly when trying to make the right business decisions at the right time,” said Jeevaratnam.

Executives do recognise there is value in data, from improved business forecasts to reduced uncertainty in decision-making and improved competitive positioning. Fifty-eight percent of Australian companies surveyed believe the flood of data entering the enterprise fundamentally changes the way their businesses operate.

Security and CRM

With growing data, there is a growing requirement for data security, with 84 percent of Australian executives reporting that they are investing in security solutions or will do so in the next 12 months.

When it comes to the most important kinds of data, Australian companies also report that customer relationship and sales information are critical to their strategic decision-making process. They recognise the opportunity to grow their top line revenue by harnessing customer information, and this focus is driving additional technology investments in customer relationship management (CRM) systems. Seventy-six percent of Australian executives have invested or are seriously considering investing in CRM in the next 12 months, higher than the global average (67 percent).

Struggle to Derive Business Value

The survey also reveals a big data disconnect. Despite the increasing volume of data, pressure to keep up with customer expectations and focus on technology investments, today's companies are still struggling to see big data as a driver of real business value. On the one hand, executives surveyed say there is value in the data. On the other hand, less than half of respondents of Australian executives – 42 percent – view the available sources of data as a strategic differentiator for their organization. Rather, the majority – 58 percent – consider data as a consequence of doing business.

“It's clear that Australian companies see real potential in learning to leverage big data effectively, but they lack the basic measures to manage it,” said Jeevaratnam. “Avanade's advice to the organisation of tomorrow is to take a creative, holistic approach to data management that integrates people, processes and technology to manage the big data phenomenon.”

For additional information or to download a copy of the executive summary, please visit <http://www.avanade.com/BigData>

About the research

The “Business Impact of Big Data” survey was conducted by Kelton Research, an independent research firm, in August 2010, and surveyed 543 C-level executives, IT decision makers and business unit leaders at top companies located in 17 countries around the world including Australia, US, UK and France.

About Avanade

Avanade provides business technology services that connect insight, innovation and expertise in Microsoft technologies to help customers realize results. Avanade's services and solutions help improve performance, productivity and sales for organizations in all industries. The company applies Microsoft expertise from its global network of consultants, drawing on the right mix of onshore, offshore and near-shore skills, which together are designed to help deliver results faster, at lower cost and with less risk. Avanade, which is majority owned by Accenture, was founded in 2000 by Accenture and Microsoft Corporation and has more than 11,000 dedicated resources in more than 24 countries. Additional information can be found at www.avanade.com.

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