GLOBAL RESEARCH SHOWS MOBILE AND SOCIAL TECHNOLOGIES COMPLICATE B2B SALES PROCESSES; BUSINESS BUYERS MIMICKING CONSUMER SHOPPERS

Business Decision-Makers Report Paying 30 Percent Premium for Improved Customer Experiences

SEATTLE – November 19, 2013 – Avanade, a global business technology solutions and managed services provider, today released results from a large-scale global survey on the changing sales process and buying patterns of business and IT decision-makers. Avanade’s latest research shows the “consumerization” movement is shifting the sales process out of the control of the seller as enterprise buyers begin to mimic consumer shopping behaviors. With this shift, the value of the customer experience is now more important than price to business and IT decision-makers.

News Highlights

- Customer experience now tops price as the most important factor in a buying decision by an enterprise decision-maker. Notably, business buyers are willing to pay up to 30 percent more for a product or service that offers an improved customer experience. Click to tweet
- Businesses no longer have control over information shared about their products or services. Sixty-one percent of business decision-makers report third-party sites and feedback from business partners, industry peers or social channels is more important than conversations with a company’s sales teams when making a purchasing decision.
- To help navigate this change, companies are enlisting new people and departments to manage the customer experience. Compared to three years ago, customer service and call centers, IT and marketing are the leading groups now playing a larger role in the customer experience.
- Seventy percent of respondents believe technology will primarily replace human interaction with customers in the next 10 years. Anticipating this change, businesses are making new technology investments, changing business processes and redesigning organizational roles. More than 80 percent of companies have changed at least one business process in the past three years to better interact with customers.

“The ‘consumerization of IT’ is dramatically transforming the traditional ways companies sell products and services to other businesses and consumers,” said Mick Slattery, Avanade executive vice president, Global Service Lines. “Businesses have lost control of the sales process, and B2B and B2C buying models are merging. It’s no longer business-to-business or business-to-consumer – it’s business-to-everyone. Those businesses that understand the nature of today’s complicated customer relationships are creating longer-term and more lucrative relationships with customers.”

This new global study builds on findings from Avanade’s Work Redesigned research conducted in January 2013. Progressive companies are changing business processes to adapt to a new style of work influenced by mobile devices, collaboration tools and social technologies. In this latest survey, Avanade found that businesses are changing processes to embrace the new business buyer and by increasing customer service and support technologies (44 percent), increasing the number of employees interacting with customers (40 percent) and adding automation to the sales process (32 percent).

There are business benefits to making these changes. The research shows that businesses investing in technology to support better customer service and modifying internal roles are seeing positive results. Specifically, the companies making these changes are experiencing increases in customer loyalty (61 percent), revenues (60 percent) and customer base (60 percent). Click to tweet
The research also supports the findings of Accenture’s High Performers in IT: Defined by Digital report, which found that companies with high performing IT organizations are focused on leveraging digital technologies to improve the customer experience. Accenture found that the top three business objectives for high performers relate to improving the customer’s experience whereas other organizations primarily focus on cutting costs and increasing productivity.

Avanade surveyed 1,000 C-level executives, business unit leaders and IT decision-makers in 19 countries across more than 12 industries.

To learn more about Avanade’s views on the new customer journey, please visit http://avana.de/CustJourney.

About the Global Survey
Avanade’s survey was conducted in October 2013 by Wakefield Research (www.wakefieldresearch.com), an independent research firm. It surveyed 1,000 C-level executives, business unit leaders and IT decision makers, at the top companies in the following countries: U.S., Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Norway, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the U.K.

About Avanade
Avanade provides business technology solutions and managed services that connect insight, innovation and expertise in Microsoft® technologies to help customers realize results. Our people have helped thousands of organizations in all industries improve business agility, employee productivity, and customer loyalty. Avanade combines the collective business, technical and industry expertise of its worldwide network of experts with the rigor of an industrialized delivery model to provide high quality solutions using proven and emerging technologies with flexible deployment models—on premises, cloud-based or outsourced. Avanade, which is majority owned by Accenture, was founded in 2000 by Accenture LLP and Microsoft Corporation and has 20,000 professionals in more than 20 countries. Additional information can be found at www.avanade.com.

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