



Global Research: Majority of Business Leaders Optimistic about Augmented Workforce Powered by Intelligent Automation; Have Moved Beyond Human vs Machines Fear Factor

Embracing intelligent automation seen as key to breaking through the productivity plateau and remaining competitive in the AI-first world

SEATTLE – June 13, 2017: Research from [Avanade](#) highlights the need for organizations to adopt intelligent automation within three years to jump-start lagging productivity and continue to differentiate with innovation. ([Click to tweet](#))

The research found more than half of global business leaders are confident intelligent automation will augment the human workforce rather than replace jobs. Indeed, with many organizations experiencing a productivity plateau (where it is simply impossible to increase productivity using traditional optimization approaches), intelligent automation offers a new opportunity to outperform the competition. However, business leaders must overcome cultural concerns about intelligent automation to drive future success, with 79% of respondents acknowledging internal resistance to change is an inhibitor to the implementation of AI technologies in their organization.

Research highlights include:

- 31% of organizations are already using intelligent automation and that number is set to more than double by 2020. ([Click to tweet](#))
- 86% of global business leaders believe their organization must deploy intelligent automation in the next five years to be a leader in its field.
- According to global business leaders, the top benefits of intelligent automation will be productivity (50%) and faster time-to-market (45%).
- Almost half of business leaders globally (43%) believe intelligent automation will make more workers available to focus on complex tasks and innovation.
- Consumers surveyed by Avanade in the UK, US and Germany agreed with business leaders that intelligent automation will free employees to spend more time on complex tasks. Unsurprisingly however, 60% of consumer respondents said that intelligent automation is more likely to replace jobs than create them.

So, what does this mean for leadership in the future? Per the research, leaders will need to embrace new capabilities to remain relevant in an AI-first world. Almost two thirds (60%) of business leaders surveyed believe an understanding of new and emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, and an ability to manage an augmented workforce (53%) will be more



important for leadership within five years than traditional functional specializations like sales and marketing.

Avanade CEO Adam Warby says, "Leaders recognize the potential for intelligent automation to accelerate productivity by driving more value from data, and freeing employees from mundane, repetitive tasks to focus on activities that require human intervention and/or add value, like innovation.

"However, while global business leaders have moved beyond the humans vs. machines fear factor, employees are yet to be convinced. To remain relevant, leaders need a vision for the AI-first world and must educate employees on the potential of intelligent automation to drive unprecedented personal and professional capabilities." ([Click to tweet](#))

Avanade recommends leaders have a roadmap in place to help guide high-level conversations, as well as discussions across the entire workforce about what intelligent automation means for the human workforce.

Intelligent automation was defined for survey respondents as a form of artificial intelligence where machines mimic the learning, decision-making and actions of humans through intelligence enabled by advanced analytics and cognitive services. Examples of intelligent automation include chat bots, object/speech recognition, and natural language processing. View our [intelligent automation research findings](#).

About the Global Survey

Avanade's online survey was conducted from May 2017 to June 2017 by Wakefield Research (www.wakefieldresearch.com), an independent research firm. It surveyed 400 C-level executives, and 400 IT Decision Makers in the US, UK, Australia, Canada, Italy, Germany, Japan, and Sweden. A total of 3,000 consumers (1,000 per market) were also surveyed in Germany, the US and UK.

About Avanade

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