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Enter the future:

The age of AI-enhanced enterprise automation

When a phenomenon is filled with powerful potential, it's easy to find words to praise it.

Enterprise automation is like that.

Automation has been influencing business processes across the enterprise for years – from the mailroom floor to the C-suite. A surge of innovations including generative AI, plus the increasing end-to-end readiness of more business operations have turned automation into a thundering torrent of strategic possibility.

Automation has become an essential element in digital transformation, as it allows companies to improve productivity, reduce costs, and enhance the quality of their services while increasing consistency and creating the potential for unlimited scale. Done right, automation can help build a human-centric experience in the workplace.

By applying automation technologies at scale across end-to-end value chains, companies can transform their operations and empower their employees to focus on more strategic and creative work – leading to increased productivity, employee satisfaction, and cost savings.

While reducing costs may be the short-term objective of automation initiatives, the long-term result is growth. Automation can help organizations respond more quickly and efficiently to changing market demands, increasing agility and competitiveness, at scale.

Do what matters

Automation is a growth priority

What initiatives are you undertaking to meet your organization's strategic priorities?

#1 Response:

31% Improving Automation of Processes and Data

— Survey of 600_+ Global 2000 Executives, HFS Research, 2023

Do what matters

As **robotic process automation** (RPA) adoption matures, it appears likely that intelligent automation will also gain traction within enterprises seeking to improve automation outcomes. **An August 2022 report from Gartner** projects global RPA software spending to reach **$2.9 billion this year, up 20% from 2021.** The worldwide RPA software market is expected to continue experiencing double-digit growth in 2023, according to the research firm.

The evolution of automation may well be a fierce stream that could sweep your organization gracefully to an ocean of opportunity. The reality, though, is that you'll likely encounter sharp bends, swirling eddies, and rough rapids along the way. While the spread of automation and AI to business processes across the enterprise is inevitable, success isn't. **Realization of value will come from the caliber of implementation.**

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Catching the automation wave without getting swept away

Automation has come a long way since the term was coined in the 1940s in the context of mechanized automobile production lines. By the 1980s and 1990s, ongoing advancements in quality and process improvement methodologies like Six Sigma blended with digital innovation, changed the trajectory of enterprise process automation. The recent wave of progress in automation is undeniable.

Among the biggest trends and shifts shaping today's enterprise automation include:

Hyperautomation

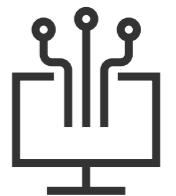**Generative AI**

Citizen development

Cloud-first

Collectively, these changes have fueled a breakneck pace of positive change in enterprise automation that has inspired business leaders to proclaim its adoption across the organization to be a business imperative.

Do what matters

Hyper-automation

Going well beyond basic RPA, hyperautomation – or "intelligent-automation" streamlines processes across an organization using integrated suites of tools that blend advanced analytics, process mining, chatbots, IoT, AI, machine learning, RPA, application development, and other technologies solutions to be built more easily and at lower cost. The aim of hyperautomation is to automate as many tasks and processes as possible, not just within a single department or function, but across the entire organization.

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Do what matters

Citizen development
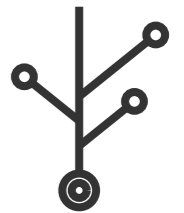
The growth of "low code/no code" development platforms has equipped nontechnical users ("citizen developers") to create apps on their own using intuitive, graphical user interfaces without complete dependence on IT departments. With skilled programmers as well as citizen developers empowered to streamline processes, the flywheel of enterprise automation is spinning faster than ever.

Do what matters

Generative AI

Generative AI is a type of artificial intelligence that can create original content like text, images, and even computer code, based on patterns it has learned from existing data. Generative AI will help innovating organizations create new business models – and possibly entire new industry categories. Beyond content creation, Generative AI can be harnessed to help predict and prevent machine failures, improve supply chain management, personalize customer experiences through targeted recommendations. Its tools can help and analyze large amounts of financial data to identify opportunities for optimization, as well as to automate financial reporting and compliance processes. Overall, the potential impact of generative AI on business operations is vast, and organizations are exploring its rapidlyevolving capabilities to gain a competitive advantage and improve operational efficiency. As a result, the top enterprise automation providers are integrating generative AI into their solutions.

Cloud-first

If automation at scale is the first step on the path to achieving unparalleled growth, adopting a cloud-first approach to enterprise technology is the launching point. Migrating enterprise technology to the cloud is a critical first step in scaling automation across the business as it provides a flexible and efficient infrastructure that can support the deployment of automation in a wide range of locations and industries.

Additionally, advances in cloud security have made it easier and more appealing for businesses to confidently deploy enterprise automation by providing secure, scalable, costeffective, and advanced infrastructure and tools. Once data is migrated to the cloud, you can more effectively use AI for hyperautomation, as well optimizing the continuing journey in the cloud.

Do what matters

The enterprise automation imperative

"Hyperautomation has shifted from an option to a condition of survival. Organizations will require more IT and business process automation as they are forced to accelerate digital transformation plans in a post-COVID-19, digital-first world."

- Fabrizio Biscotti, Research Vice President, Gartner, 2021

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Do what matters

Hyper-automation's impact is spreading

Advances in process automation have created opportunities for nearly every aspect of an organization. Consider the following real-world, enterprise-wide use cases:

Sales and Marketing

Customer Service

Human Resources

Compliance and fraud prevention

Knowledge management

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Sales and marketing: Hyperautomation is helping sales teams by generating pre-sales call intelligence, meeting summaries and action items including potential upselling and cross-selling ideas. Marketing teams can capture and analyze data more efficiently and to identify changing market sentiments in-real time, enabling marketing departments to make faster, data-driven decisions. Marketing automation tools help marketers to create, personalize, manage, and measure marketing campaigns for better results. Add generative AI to those tools and marketers gain a tireless marketing content ideation machine.

Customer service: Self-service, generative AI chatbots are being used to record, communicate, and engage with customers while routing requests to appropriate team members for prompt human response. Teams can to monitor customer service conversations, provide agents with real-time coaching, automated actions, and call summaries. When you can reduce overall incident handling time, you not only improve the customer experience, you also can increase agent efficiency and job satisfaction.

Human resources: Automation can help HR departments streamline the recruiting process by automating tasks such as candidate screening, resume analysis, and scheduling interviews. It can also help to reduce bias in the recruiting process by removing human error and judgment. HR departments can keep better track of employee benefit enrollments, changes, and cancellations. Automation also helps HR professionals analyze benefits data to identify trends, risks, and opportunities which companies can use to optimize their benefits programs, reduce costs, and improve employee satisfaction.

Compliance and fraud prevention: Automation can improve regulatory compliance reporting by automatically collecting data from various sources, aggregating it, and generating the necessary reports. Automation can also help identify potential risks by analyzing large amounts of data and generating alerts when certain thresholds are exceeded.

Knowledge management: Hyperautomation can help companies automate their knowledge management processes by performing tasks such as data entry, data validation, and data retrieval. AI-driven speech-to-text transcription capabilities are delivering real-time, in-context meeting transcripts – freeing meeting attendees from manual notetaking so they can stay focused on the discussion.

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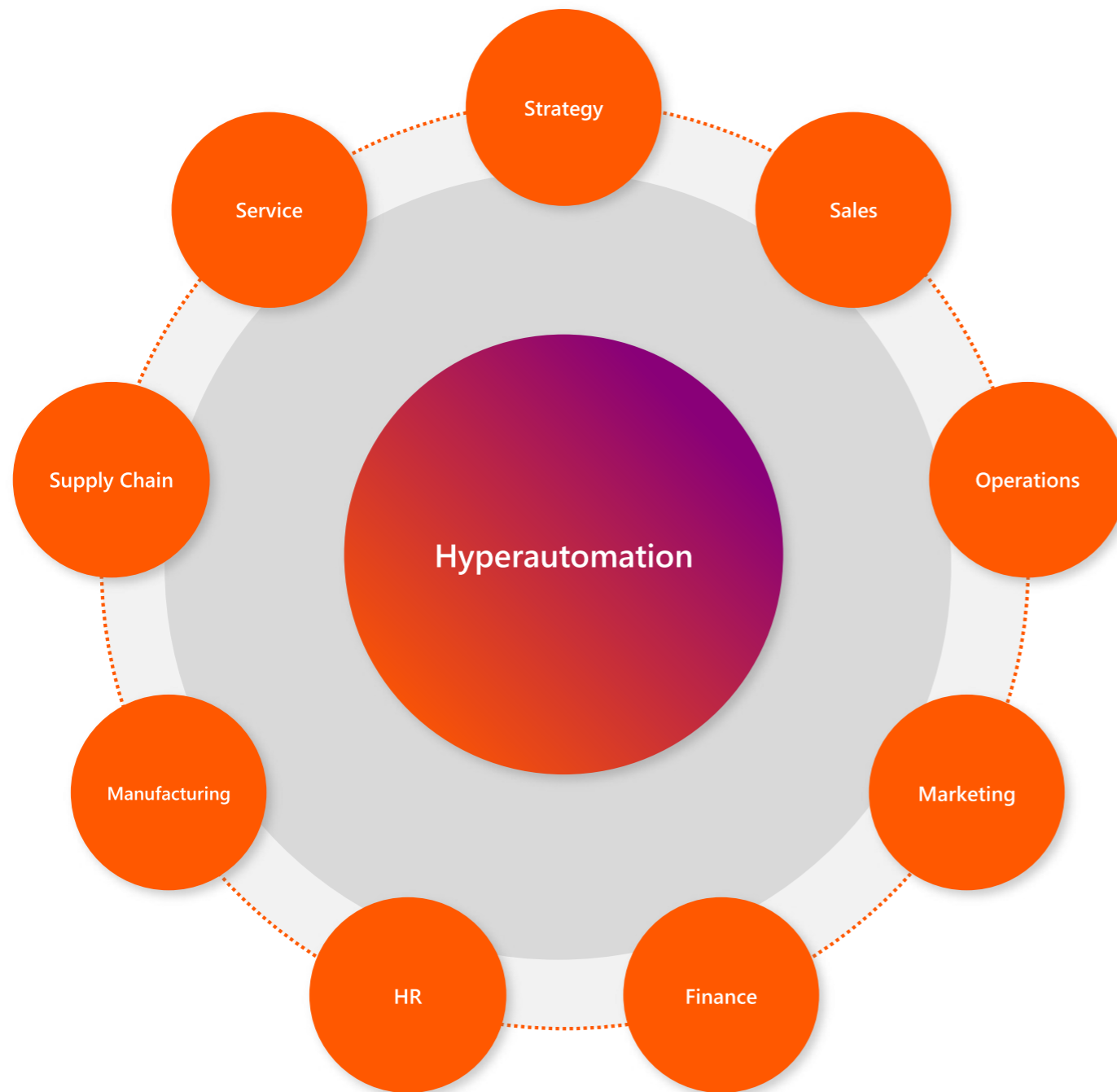
Automation is not only influencing companies across their many functional areas, but also impacting companies across myriad industries – from financial services and healthcare to retail and manufacturing. Whether it is supporting revenue growth or cost savings, the opportunity for automation continues to accelerate.

Do what matters 13

Prepare to capture considerable savings

For organizations interested in cost reduction and savings, Avanade has helped clients, through automation, achieve:

50% improvement in incidental resolution time	**30-45%** increase in employee satisfaction
$15m savings	**40-60%** reduction in processing costs

just to name a few examples.

Do what matters

Inevitable doesn't mean easy

If the influence of hyperautomation is inevitable, why hasn't every organization fully embraced it? There are several perceived obstacles that may prevent quicker or more successful adoption.

Resistance to process change	Stuck with the wrong platform	Picking the wrong new platform	Messy processes	Managing and integrating multiple processes
Organizations often encounter resistance from employees and stakeholders when implementing changes to existing processes – especially those that initially seem to diminish or disintermediate their jobs. With the wrong approach, employees will feel threatened, not empowered.	When a company clings to its legacy technology, its automation initiatives can be foiled in several ways. Legacy tech can create a jungle of disparate, inflexible systems that do not integrate seamlessly, making it difficult to incorporate automation solutions and have data flow seamlessly.	If a company fails to select a comprehensive, "always modern" cloud-based solution, it risks getting stuck with automation efforts that don't scale and aren't agile enough to keep up with competitors.	Ill-defined or poorly governed business processes that lack standardization across teams make it confusing for those being asked to streamline and automate murky systems. Such an environment ensures a slow transformation.	Organizations face difficulties in coordinating and merging various processes for seamless automation. Lack of insight into when and how to convert manual processes into automated ones can slow transformation just as surely as not knowing when to include manual interventions into processes that have special regulatory, quality or customer service nuances.

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Do what matters

Inevitable doesn't mean easy <superscript>(2/2)</superscript>

If the influence of hyperautomation is inevitable, why hasn't every organization fully embraced it? There are several perceived obstacles that may prevent quicker or more successful adoption.

Lack of expertise

Organizations may not have the necessary in-house expertise to effectively implement and manage automation technologies – especially at scale across a global entity.

Poor choice of partner

Without sufficient internal expertise, companies pursuing automation success often turn to external partners. There can be great project risk in selecting the wrong partner – one which isn't sufficiently experienced, skilled, collaborative, and connected to the best automation platform providers.

Difficulty in applying automation at scale

Some organizations struggle to implement automation on a large enough scale, which hinders their ability to achieve maximum benefits. If your automation work is stuck in the proof-of-concept phase, your strategy and approach might need an overhaul.

Fragmented governance of automation projects

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Going beyond implementation

RPA and legacy automation programs have failed in great numbers due to programs not continuing beyond the initial implementation and managing the automation solutions that have been put in place.

Do what matters

A well-considered enterprise automation strategy is essential, but it isn't the main factor in determining success or failure. The Standish Group is a primary research advisory organization that focuses on software development performance. The firm's **2020 Chaos Report** tracked the success and failure rates of IT projects for over two decades and found that – over that time - only **34% of projects were considered successful,** while **66% were challenged or failed,** primarily due to poor execution and project management practices. Execution excellence is a crucial determinant of success or failure in an enterprise automation initiative. The primary hurdles to successful execution are, in large part, centered around the automation platform selected and the talent available to implement.

Do what matters

Ensure automation success through execution excellence

"Execution is everything."

"Success only comes through execution."

"Execution is the key to making innovation work."

"Success is 10% strategy and 90% execution."

Larry Bossily,
former CEO of AlliedSignal and Honeywell

Mark Cuban,
entrepreneur and investor

Steve Blank,
entrepreneur and author

Sanjay Khosla,
Boston Consulting Group

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Do what matters

To execute successfully, don't go it alone

The opportunity for automation is immense and diverse, but it also requires careful planning, implementation, and evaluation. Businesses need to assess their current and future needs, capabilities, and goals, and identify the best automation solutions for their specific contexts and challenges. The starting point for realizing the full advantage of your automation program is identifying the right technology platform and the right partner to guide your journey.

10% strategy + 90% execution = automation success

Right platform   **Right partner**

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Microsoft provides the right platform

The *right* enterprise automation ecosystem fuses AI, RPA, and other automation components in a cloud-first environment. It includes not only the functional software but the infrastructure, integration, security, and service ops to run it effectively at scale. If you want true enterprise-grade scalability for the broadest range of users, look to the brand best known for delivering scalable solutions: Microsoft.

Intelligent Automation from Microsoft is a fusion of AI, Workflow, Integration, API Automation and RPA bundled together in the comprehensive Power Platform offering which serves as the workflow designer and orchestrator, fueling automation across diverse interfaces through a single, end-to-end platform.

Running on Azure, Microsoft's Power Platform provides automation, intelligence, and orchestration:

- **Power Automate**
- **Power Platform**
- **Azure Services**
- **Generative AI Integration**
- **Governance Ready**

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Power Automate: Powerful yet simple-to-use automation suiteRPA blending the best of workflow and UI-automation that is an essential element of Power Platform.

Power Platform: Enhance Power Automate with Power Platform's full suite of features including Power Virtual Agents, Power BI, Power Pages and Power Apps. The combination is a complete palette for digital transformation and automation creativity. Microsoft Power Platform is an enterprise ready solution that enables organizations to build and deploy applications and workflows that connect to their existing data sources and systems, such as Power BI, Dynamics 365, Azure, and Office 365. This way, organizations can leverage their previous investments in Microsoft tools and extend their capabilities with low-code solutions.

Governance-ready: Microsoft Power Platform, for instance, offers a trusted, secure, and governable platform that meets the needs of IT professionals and business users alike. It provides tools for monitoring, auditing, and managing applications and workflows across the organization. It also supports compliance with industry standards and regulations.

Azure services: Azure includes a cognitive services toolset for the development of applications that can process and generate essential insights from unstructured data with API calls. Microsoft's AI Builder is also a key automation component built on the strength of Azure AI capabilities. It lets you build no-code models, enhance the intelligence of your automation efforts, and glean insights from your data in Power Apps and Power Automate.

Azure Automation is a cloud-based automation service that supports consistent management across both Azure and non-Azure environments and includes process automation features. The Azure Automation service is designed to automate frequent, time-consuming, and error-prone cloud management tasks, allowing users to focus on work that adds business value.

Generative AI integration: Microsoft is on the forefront of cutting-edge research in AI and integrating these powerful, innovative AI technologies into its offerings. Microsoft AI, powered by Azure, provides billions of intelligent experiences every day in Windows, Xbox, Microsoft 365, Teams, Azure AI, Power Platform, Dynamics 365 and Microsoft Defender. Microsoft is integrating generative AI technology into its Office productivity apps and it recently debuted a new version of its Bing search engine that included a chatbot powered by OpenAI's GPT-4 language technology. These investments make it faster and easier to infuse intelligence-powered automation throughout an organization.

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Do what matters

Microsoft Intelligent Automation solution recognized as a leader

"Microsoft is all-in with Intelligent Automation. Microsoft automation is more than just RPA. Intelligence and workflow automation across the business is a clear differentiator for Power Automate."

- The Forrester Wave^{tm}: Robotic Process Automation, Q1 2021

Do what matters

Avanade can help you turn your business processes from "outdated" to "automated"

Scaling automation requires a new operating model with three elements necessary for achieving success at scale: the right technology ecosystem, the right domain experts, and the right automation governance. While Microsoft provides the right technology ecosystem, Avanade provides the right domain expertise and the right automation governance.

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The right domain experts

Among the biggest challenges to scaling automation is insufficient domain expertise: the lack of in-house skill and experience with automation and AI technologies.

Avanade can provide a thorough complement to a company's automation domain knowledge through our Microsoft expertise. Avanade's global team includes 4,200-plus automation experts, 1,000 data engineers, 400 AI practitioners, 300 cognitive service experts and more certified Azure professionals than any other Microsoft partner.   We've completed 6,000-plus automations for over 350 clients. Avanade domain experts are not only technically savvy but also skilled at process ownership, design, testing, maintenance, compliance and change management.

As a joint venture of Microsoft and Accenture, Avanade typically has early-access, first-hand insight into Microsoft's innovations.   Avanade experts are intimately familiar with the inner workings of Power Automate Desktop and the code base integrating in

Winautomation. When it comes to Microsoft's SDK for porting automations from other platforms into Power Automate, no other Microsoft Partner has deeper understanding or experience.

Avanade is continuously enhancing the capabilities we bring to our automation clients – meaning our partnership commitment long-term and aimed at continuous improvement of our customers' ongoing automation initiatives.   For example, Avanade is the #1 partner of Microsoft in the process mining space because it leverages the power of Microsoft Azure and Power BI to deliver scalable and secure process mining solutions. Avanade combines its deep expertise in Microsoft technologies with its industry knowledge and process excellence capabilities to help clients achieve their automation goals through process mining.

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The right governance

Citizen development and the expanding field of automation apps require a carefully balanced governance approach incorporating strategy, planning, architecture, and project support. Microsoft's Power Platform Center of Excellence Starter Kit and Managed Environments capability, delivers a baseline set of automation and tooling to monitor, coordinate, and nurture the deployment of Power Platform.   Avanade has deep experience adapting the Starter Kit for specific business situations and surrounding it with strategy, structure, standards, and success metrics.

Beyond implementation – delivering the results – Avanade's approach goes beyond the implementation of automation to helping clients manage their automation solutions longer term, and deliver the return on investment, and the results that were committed to the business.

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Here's how to get started

Armed with the right platform and partner, automation is a powerful tool for transforming organizations, but it requires careful planning and diligent execution. Here are some smart first steps on the path to enterprise automation.

1 Assess your automation readiness

Where is your organization on the automation journey? How far can you take it? Avanade can conduct a rapid review of your readiness to adopt automation on an enterprise-wide scale. We'll share an evaluation tailored for your business.

2 Plan your path forward

You need a partner that can meet your organization wherever it is on the automation journey. Avanade's automation strategy workshops help you identify how best to leverage intelligent automation to deliver its full business value.

3 Scale your success

Enjoy the enterprise-wide benefits when you infuse automation into essential business processes across your organization – from the mundane to the strategic.

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Ready to take enterprise automation to the next level?

No matter where you are on your automation journey, you can keep moving forward with an Avanade automation workshop. Whether you're just getting started on your automation journey, or working to bring automation advantages to your business, Avanade is ready to help you design a strategy and set a course for success. Our consultations and workshops are custom-fit to your needs, your business, and your priorities. Contact Avanade today and find your next automation opportunity.

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North America
Seattle
Phone +1 206 239 5600
America@avanade.com

South America
Sao Paulo
AvanadeBrasil@avanade.com

Asia-Pacific
Australia
Phone +61 2 9005 5900
AsiaPac@avanade.com

Europe
London
Phone +44 0 20 7025 1000
Europe@avanade.com

About Avanade

Avanade is the leading provider of innovative digital and cloud services, business solutions and design-led experiences on the Microsoft ecosystem. Every day, our professionals bring bold, fresh thinking combined with technology, business and industry expertise to help make a genuine human impact on our clients, their customers and their employees. We are the power behind the Accenture Microsoft Business Group, helping companies to engage customers, empower employees, optimize operations and transform products, leveraging the Microsoft platform. Avanade has 60,000 professionals in 26 countries, bringing clients our best thinking through a collaborative culture that honors diversity and reflects the communities in which we operate. Majority owned by Accenture, Avanade was founded in 2000 by Accenture LLP and Microsoft Corporation. Learn more at **www.avanade.com**.

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