



## Point of View

# Smart technologies are delivering benefits to the enterprise— is your business one of them?

Organizations that have invested in smart technologies are already seeing rewards including higher revenues, an improved customer experience and increased employee satisfaction. And while the media is focused on the likely repurposing of up to 20% of existing jobs, Avanade's research shows that organizations are retraining employees, creating new roles and reorganizing their structure to prepare for the future.



## Evolution of the digital workplace

Since the Industrial Revolution, machines have augmented the work of humans. Avanade's latest global research affirms what industry pundits and forecasters have predicted for some time: the next wave of smart technologies, connected things and intelligent automation is dramatically changing the digital workplace and benefiting the enterprise.

Business and IT leaders participating in Avanade's study unequivocally believe that the increased use of smart technologies will trigger dramatic shifts in how we work, when we work and what type of work we do. Avanade asserts that this evolution isn't the doom and gloom that others paint it to be.

## Smart technologies bring about significant benefits

While business and IT leaders know their world is going to dramatically change, 93% told Avanade they are already investing in smart technologies. Why?

Because they see significant economic and other benefits stemming from the increased use of smart technologies in the enterprise.

For example, business and IT leaders predict they will see an increase of more than one-third (33%) in revenues from the use of smart technologies over the next five years.

Other benefits cited by respondents include increased efficiency, an improved customer experience, improved decision making, as well as increased employee satisfaction and retention.

### What are smart technologies?

Avanade's global survey of business and IT leaders defined smart technologies as computers or machines that do the work of or make decisions traditionally made by humans.

Examples include but are not limited to connected devices, digital assistants and intelligent automation.

Avanade's global research asked business and IT leaders to assess their current use of smart technologies; what benefits they are extracting from them today; and how they see them changing the digital workplace of the future.



## New opportunities emerge in the digital workplace

In Avanade's survey, 91% of respondents believe their organizations' workforce will need to change substantially as smart technologies become more widely used.

That said, leaders are confident that smart technologies will help with the war for talent as they seek more highly skilled employees who will think smarter, make more critical decisions and collaborate. Other highlights:

- **Smart technologies will help in the war for talent with 92% believing that it will actually be easier for organizations to attract and retain top talent** as they increase their reliance on smart technologies in the workplace.

- **73% say organizations will need to hire more skilled employees** to make more complex decisions (presumably because all those machines will be doing the mundane tasks).

- Employees will need to bring these skills to the digital workplace of the future: **problem solving (61%); the ability to gather and analyze data (59%), critical thinking (51%) collaboration (51%).**

Business and IT leaders told Avanade they expect **20% of jobs will be repurposed by 2020.**

Avanade's research also found that:

- **An overwhelming majority (90%)** of respondents agreed that their organizations' workforce will need to adapt in response to smart technologies. Some of these changes included retraining current employees (52%), creating new roles (51%) and reorganizing their company's structure (48%).

- **Over half of respondents – 54% –** said they would actually be willing to work for a robo-boss.

## Compelling new roles in the digital workplace

We could focus on the negative press that comes with the predictions of our workforce changing, but Avanade joins the many other technology companies who believe humans are and always will be necessary to make a truly digital workplace successful.

Smart machines clearly offer benefits to the enterprise, including the opportunity to increase revenues, optimize efficiencies and better serve their customers in a digital world. Avanade helps clients around the world deploy these technologies every day in their organizations—and we see our clients realizing results *today* as they evolve their digital workplaces.

But the enterprise isn't the only beneficiary in this brave new world. With more smart machines working in the enterprise, people are freed up to concentrate on critical business issues and innovation; to decide on which course of action artificial intelligence should take in certain instances—or even to override decisions made by machines.

As the research findings point out, collaboration, communication and problem solving will be paramount in the digital workplace of the future.

That will require technologies that enable those workplace shifts to happen—whether they be in an actual office or as information workers do their jobs wherever they happen to be.

## Making digital work

The truth is, while we'd all like to think that robots and intelligent machines are far off, they are already all around us.

We use them every day to buy coffee from our smart phone, move cash from checking to savings, arrange a ride across town and monitor Fido at doggy daycare.

So why not have them also change the way we all work—and *change it for the better?*

And it will require that the enterprise harness mobility, the cloud and connected things to support their information workers.

We think an exciting era looms large for the enterprise and employees alike: one in which technologies get smarter and free us up to work on more strategic initiatives that drive value, revenues *and* job satisfaction.

Could the water cooler gossip get more interesting with machines in the workplace? You bet. But so could how we work, when we work, and what we work on.

And that is perhaps the most compelling and interesting prediction of them all.

## About the global survey

Avanade's survey was conducted from December 2015 to January 2016 by Wakefield Research ([www.wakefieldresearch.com](http://www.wakefieldresearch.com)), an independent research firm. It surveyed 500 C-level executives, business unit leaders and IT decision-makers at companies in the following countries: Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States.

**Want to know more? Go to [www.avanade.com/smarttech](http://www.avanade.com/smarttech) and follow the conversation on Twitter at #makeworkdigital**



### About Avanade

Avanade is the leading provider of innovative digital and cloud-enabling services, business solutions and design-led experiences, delivered through the power of people and the Microsoft ecosystem. Majority owned by Accenture, Avanade was founded in 2000 by Accenture LLP and Microsoft Corporation and has 29,000 professionals in 23 countries. Visit us at [www.avanade.com](http://www.avanade.com).

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