Explore 2018’s most important IT trends

Prepare for a year of rapid changes in the technologies that enable business
Learn what’s around the corner for enterprise IT

*Be prepared to take advantage of digital's opportunities.*

The enterprise IT landscape is changing fast. New technologies, management models and practices are proliferating rapidly. These trends are likely to have a huge impact on how businesses interact with customers, as well as how employees work.

- These trends pose both a threat and an opportunity:
- If an organisation invests in the wrong emerging technology, they risk wasting time and capital. If they fail to adapt at all, they risk missing out on enormous opportunities to generate revenue and reach new audiences.
- Firms which spot the key trends for their industry in advance – and act on them – will reap the rewards for years to come. Customers will perceive them as innovators. Competitors will see them as ‘the one to beat’.

**The experts monitoring the trends**

As one of the world’s leading systems integrators, we help thousands of organisations around the world digitally transform, understanding how new technology will help them succeed. We also carry out multiple surveys of industry leaders to understand where the market is going. Every year, we draw on our research and our day-to-day experience of working with technology leaders around the world to outline the top IT trends for the next 12 months. Our analysis is made freely available on our website, where you can read in more depth about each of the specific trends. This document will provide an overview of the six trends we have identified for 2018.
The IT trends which will shape the coming year

Our technology specialists discuss their areas of expertise
Digital business trends 2018

‘Systems integration skills are key for legacy companies hoping to compete effectively against new market entrants’

Ettienne Reinecke, Chief Technology Officer
Scott Gibson, Group Executive Digital Practice
In 2018, we see a lot of potential for a range of exciting new technologies that will support digital business. However, for any of them to succeed, companies will need to invest in the correct digital architectures to support their plans.

**AI, robotics and augmented and virtual reality (AR/VR)** will begin to work together, offering more complementary outcomes for businesses that invest in them. AR, in particular, will move beyond video games and entertainment into the world of business.

We expect to see a boom in wireless technologies, and these will help support the expansion of IoT. **Blockchain** will also bring real value to organisations that use IoT, by providing a method for firms to securely collect information from thousands of sensors.

### Key figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>45%</th>
<th>$150 billion</th>
<th>20%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of organisations that still find managing multiple IT environments complex</td>
<td>VR and AR sales to hit this figure by 2020(^1)</td>
<td>Estimated proportion of businesses that use security solutions that protect their IoT devices</td>
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[Go here](#) to explore more detail on the top 5 digital business trends.

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Digital infrastructure trends 2018

‘IT leaders will intensify their efforts to identify and eliminate the inhibitors of speed’

Kevin Leahy, Group SVP — Data Centre Business Unit
Businesses in every industry are increasingly aware of the threat posed by digital disruption. So, in 2018 we expect to see incumbent companies shoring up their digital infrastructure so they are leaner, more flexible, and better placed to adapt to an unpredictable market.

We expect that businesses will increasingly focus on speed of deployment over cost. They will realise that the most important benefit of a new technology will simply be getting it to work – rather than focussing on ROI or total cost of ownership.

Companies that focus on innovation and differentiation will find it easiest to adapt in this market and we expect to see developers using container technology heavily. We also expect to see more firms utilising APIs to add value to their products.

Another related change will be a shift in focus from technology architectures to service architectures, as firms attempt to standardise the way they use multiple different services. We will also see an evolution of big data, as firms seek to better manage the information they collect.

**Key figures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>40%</th>
<th>18,400+</th>
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<tr>
<td>Rate at which container technology is growing year on year</td>
<td>Number of APIs listed on ProgrammableWeb.com as of 3 October 2017</td>
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Go here to explore more on the top digital infrastructure trends.

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2 http://www.zdnet.com/article/container-market-keeps-growing/
3 https://www.programmableweb.com/
Hybrid cloud trends 2018

‘It’s critical that organisations stop thinking about IoT as simply a collection of connected sensors and devices’

Dan Greengarten, SVP – Sales, Cloud Services, and Alliances
Despite the promise of hybrid cloud, we expect that many organisations will still go into 2018 trying to work out how to get real value from hybrid. In particular, cost containment will continue to be a major issue for firms that run their IT estate on-premise and in the cloud. One possible solution will come from the rise of hybrid cloud management solutions, which will give customers a clearer view of how information – and spend – is distributed across their hybrid cloud estate.

We also expect to see innovation from cloud providers themselves. Many smaller cloud businesses will specialise in certain industries – out of recognition that offering a generalised service in competition with Amazon Web Services or Microsoft Azure is a non-starter. But, they will also need to offer a more unified cybersecurity posture – with customers demanding more from cloud providers in this area.

Key figures

59%
Proportion of businesses that have at least some form of hybrid cloud

Top 5 reasons people think about moving to hybrid:
1. End-user demand for new features
2. End-user demand for faster provisioning
3. Data centre is out of capacity
4. To keep in step with industry peers
5. Hardware refresh

55%
Say security or compliance is the top reason for stopping them using more hosted IT infrastructure

46%
Say cost management is the most challenging aspect of cloud deployment

Go here to explore more detail on the top 5 hybrid cloud trends.
Digital workplace trends 2018

‘In 2018 we expect to see smart buildings evolving into what we call “smart workplaces”’

In the coming year, we will see an evolution of the trends we discovered in our 2017 Digital Workspaces survey. Some of these tech trends will be more centred on enhancing long-established enterprise activities, others will introduce relatively new approaches.
In terms of enhancing well-established technology, we predict that web-based, real-time communications will become significantly easier, replacing the need for dedicated desktop programs. We also see video-enabled conferencing rooms becoming the norm in most offices.

Newer trends which are already emerging, yet less pronounced, include the use of voice-enabled virtual assistants around the office. These tools will help employees save time and focus more of their energies on tasks that matter. We also expect to see some exciting evolutions in the way office space is used, with IoT-enabled offices providing workers with a more productive environment, and beacon-enabled stores giving shoppers a more personalised experience.

We will also see experimentation with BYOA – Bring Your Own App – where users choose the tools they want to use rather conform to IT-mandated tools. This will introduce a range of risks and issues around security, as well as information management, but will offer benefits to companies that have a well-thought out strategy.

### Key figures

<table>
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<th>50%</th>
<th>62%</th>
<th>39%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of businesses that say conferencing technology has ‘significantly’ improved business</td>
<td>Proportion of organisations which say IT issues are a major barrier to successful adoption of new workstyles</td>
<td>Proportion of enterprises that say they already have a defined and agreed-on digital workspace strategy</td>
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**Top 3 reasons for pursuing a digital workplace strategy:**
- Improve business processes
- Gain competitive advantage
- Grow revenues and increase competitiveness

*N.B. These figures come from our [2017 Digital Workplace Report](dimensiondata.com/2017DigitalWorkplaceReport)*

*Go here* to explore more detail on the top 5 digital workplace trends.
Customer experience trends 2018

‘We expect to see organisations that have a clear CX strategy and are executing it aggressively experience massive growth’

Joe Manuele, Group Executive — Customer Experience and Workplace Productivity
Rob Allman, Group Senior Vice President — Customer Experience and Collaboration
We predict that 2018 will be the year that the many strands of digital begin to come together to offer a more cohesive CX. We expect to see leaders finally **streamlining omnichannel, offering a more connected customer journey**.

We also expect to see **artificial intelligence helping customer-facing staff** by taking on many of the more repetitive tasks currently distributed over multiple systems. AI will bring information from different sources into one place, meaning that staff will spend less time trawling through different systems and interfaces.

Finally, we expect to see a **shift from mass customer service to mass personalisation**.

### Key figures

<table>
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<th>81%</th>
<th>13%</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>76%</th>
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<td>Companies that recognise CX as a competitive differentiator</td>
<td>The proportion of businesses that rate their own CX delivery as 9/10 or better</td>
<td>Connecting customer journeys is reported as the second most important reason to transform CX</td>
<td>Cannot identify blockages in process that impact CX</td>
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* N.B. These figures come from Dimension Data’s [2017 Global Customer Experience Benchmarking Report](https://www.dcdi.com/resources/2017-global-customer-experience-benchmarking-report) |

**Top 5 channel focus areas:**

1. Virtual assistants
2. Instant messaging
3. Mobile apps
4. Video chat
5. Internet of Things

[Go here](https://www.dcdi.com/resources/2017-global-customer-experience-benchmarking-report) to explore more detail on the top 5 customer experience trends.
Cybersecurity trends 2018

‘We can expect to see significant disruption in the cybersecurity industry’

Matthew Gyde, Group Executive – Cybersecurity
The threat of cybersecurity disruption is greater than ever, and so we expect that in 2018 organisations will start doubling down on defence. One of the major trends we expect to see is the return of zero-trust models, where businesses require people logging onto their systems to go further to prove who they are. Multi-factor authentication will play a big role in this. Fortunately, the technology underpinning multi-factor authentication has improved to such a degree that logging in won’t necessarily slow employees down.

We also expect to see an increase in uptake of ever more sophisticated technologies which fight against breaches. These include deception technologies, where fake accounts are created on an organisation’s systems to catch out cybercriminals who believe they have penetrated external firewalls. We’ll also see increasing demand for deep learning technologies and ‘robo-hunters’ that monitor how people behave on office systems and alert for any unusual behaviour.

**Key figures**

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<th>49%</th>
<th>$1 billion</th>
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<td>Proportion of businesses that experienced a ransomware attack in 2016</td>
<td>Ransomware profit in 2016</td>
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Top 4 victim industries:
- Business and professional services (28%)
- Government (19%)
- Healthcare (15%)
- Retail (15%)

*N.B. these figures are reported in our [2017 Ransomware: The Digital Disruptor report](dimensiondata.com/2018ITtrends)*

Go here to explore more detail on the top 5 cybersecurity trends.