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Short summary

In the new world of information technology, which is now becoming the key driver of market differentiation, business growth and profitability, digital efforts in software development will be key factors to business innovation and expansion. In this report, Accenture lays out the major technological trends affecting organisations in the public and private sectors, arguing that today every business should be considered a digital business.

Key trends

- **Relationships at Scale** – Moving beyond transactions to digital relationships: “The tendency of many companies has been to use mobile technology, social networks, and context-based services largely to create more detailed views of consumers, consumer attributes, and transactions rather than using the new digital connections to improve the ways in which they interact with those consumers as individuals.”
- **Design for Analytics** – Form the questions and design for the answers: “Most companies (...) recognize that information is valuable for future insight, so they capture more of it. But “more data” doesn’t equal “better data”. Generally, companies are capturing this data without specific questions in mind. So, when data are repurposed as inputs for strategic decisions — such as entering a new market or pricing a new service — glaring information gaps often arise.”

- **Data Velocity** – Matching the speed of decisions to the speed of action: Currently, “business leaders have been bombarded with statistics about the soaring volumes and incredible variety of data that they can mine for precious insights. But they need to pay attention to data velocity — the pace with which data can be gathered, sorted, and analysed in order to produce insights that managers can act on quickly.” In the future trend, it will no longer be about data size, it will be about matching the velocity of data to the pace at which business processes need to act on it.

- **Seamless Collaboration** – Embed collaboration into the business process: “For the most part, enterprise collaboration today is still a set of siloed communication channels, from e-mail to videoconference to social-activity streams. Users are expected to figure out by themselves how to use those channels to do their job and improve their productivity. To increase productivity, enterprises must move beyond standalone social and collaboration channels; they must begin to directly embed such channels into their core business processes. The new approach: build social, collaborative applications throughout the enterprise.”

- **Software-Defined Networking** – Virtualisation’s last mile: “With virtualization investments already paying off in servers and starting to pay off in storage, businesses will turn their attention to virtualizing the network in order to extend the life of their infrastructure and reap the full value of their virtualization investments. Like other virtualization technologies, software-defined networking has the ability to radically change the flexibility with which businesses and IT operate.

- **Active Defence** – Adapting cyber defence to the threat: At the moment, “IT attack surfaces keep widening across more devices, more systems, more people, more partners, and broader infrastructure. Cloud and mobility have created new places for hackers to probe. Targeted forms of cybercrime are raising threat levels. And legacy systems that were never designed for a connected world have been brought online, opening up further weak points.” Looking towards the future, “IT leaders need to stay alert for the next round of security advancements. Some of the focus is shifting from studying your systems to studying the people using them. In parallel, there is intense activity going into “active defence” systems that actually engage the enemy with the objectives of making it more difficult, more expensive, and less profitable for hackers to do their work.”

- **Beyond the Cloud** – The value lies in how you use the cloud: Companies are now shifting their thinking from asking if they should use cloud technology to how they can use it. “The technology is here, so the conversations should now turn to how these tools can be used to differentiate a company’s business, helping it get to market faster and respond more flexibly to opportunities and obstacles.”

Suggestions

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Methodology

Survey

Reference to other trends reports? If yes, which reports?

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