

80 percent of organizations are turning to citizen developers to drive innovation

August 26 2014, by Liz Campbell

IBM today announced the results of a global study that revealed 80 percent of leading enterprises are forming new partnerships with "citizen developers," industry professionals operating outside the scope of enterprise IT. These citizen developers help to close the skills gap for application development to drive greater collaboration and innovation across cloud, analytics, mobile and social technologies.

["Raising the Game: The IBM Business Tech Trends Report"](#) was conducted by the IBM Center for Applied Insights and is based on responses from more than 1,400 IT and business decision makers in 15 industries across five continents. The survey found that 40 percent of all organizations still report moderate-to-major skills gaps across cloud, analytics, mobile and social technologies, despite these technologies being recognized as the drivers for key innovations.

The study examined common traits of "pacesetters," leading organizations that are achieving tangible business results from cloud, analytics, mobile and social technologies. Pacesetters are finding creative new ways to narrow the skills gaps in their organization, including gaps in general IT skills, application development or data analytics. One way pacesetters are filling these gaps is via partnerships with citizen developers, an emerging group of industry professionals who create new business applications and help with IT decisions as a side venture—outside of their regular work responsibilities.

In addition to turning to citizen developers, these pacesetter

organizations are twice as likely to turn to academia for product development and 70 percent are more likely to engage with start-ups for execution.

Tapping the Power of the Crowd

Organizations that actively crowdsource ideas and technology assets with customers, partners and academia drive deeper engagement for positive results, according to the survey findings.

For example, Esri, an IBM Business Partner and a leading developer of geographic information systems (GIS) software, regularly uses sites such as Github, a repository for open source code, to share and build apps for cloud, analytics, mobile and social technologies. In regard to its own product roadmap, Esri also conducts hackathons and application challenges that drive creativity and product feedback.

For example, Esri recently sponsored a "climate resiliency app challenge" that was won by a student team from the University of Minnesota working on a semester-long project to assess solar suitability in Minnesota.

"Through our efforts in events like hackathons and application challenges that appeal to citizen developers, we ensure that we have a pulse on what leading edge developers would like to do with geospatial - and all of this informs our own roadmap," said Robin Jones, director, platform adoption, Esri. "The outcomes are fast, beneficial and interesting for everyone."

Providing Better Customer Experience through the Cloud

The study indicated that pacesetter organizations are four to seven times more likely to use cloud technology to deliver social, mobile, and big data and analytics capabilities. Fifty-five percent of pacesetters are using mobile solutions via the cloud and are five times more likely to deliver social business solutions via the cloud than their competitors.

eyeQ, which provides in-store retail solutions that mimic the online store experience, is one example of a company combining cloud-based solutions built on IBM's cloud platform-as-a-service (PaaS), IBM Bluemix. Bluemix uses powerful analytics to help brick and mortar stores harness ecommerce capabilities to help eyeQ better engage with its in-store customers. In addition, eyeQ customers can leverage mobile location data to opt-in via text message to receive a seamless personal and targeted in-store shopping experience.

Another example of a company helping organizations better integrate cloud, mobile and social technologies is Hootsuite, which provides a widely used social relationship platform. Hootsuite delivers a comprehensive cloud platform so organizations can better integrate public and company social networks, such as IBM Connections, to increase efficiency and productivity while streamlining internal collaboration. The integration between IBM Connections and Hootsuite allows users to improve collective intelligence by empowering users to share knowledge across an organization, increase coordination and project management, and save time by unifying multiple messages across different social networks.

Unlocking the Power of Analytics to Drive Results

Real-time business demands real-time results, a concept that pacesetters have fully embraced by implementing a strong analytical foundation across business functionalities. The study found that nearly 90 percent of respondents have mature big data and analytics capabilities, while 60

percent plan to increase investment in this area by 10 percent or more over the next two years.

Additionally, the study found nearly seven out of 10 pacesetter organizations make analytical insights a significant part of their decision-making process.

Fiserv, a global financial services technology provider and IBM Business Partner, has made analytics integral to its business. With a deep integration of analytics in its banking and payments solutions, Fiserv helps its financial institution clients gain deeper insights into customer trends and behaviors.

Through a focus on analytics, Fiserv worked with an \$8 billion savings bank to strengthen customer relationships and spur mobile banking and electronic bill pay adoption. Fiserv provided analytical solutions to help identify individual customer groups for targeted marketing efforts that helped the institution gain substantial increases in mobile banking and bill pay utilization across its customer base.

"The 2014 Business Tech Trends report illustrates how IBM Business Partners and clients are leading their industries due to their use of cloud, [analytics](#), mobile and social technologies," said Sandy Carter, IBM general manager of ecosystem development. "Companies are no longer just dipping their toes into the water with these key technologies. Pacesetter organizations are diving in and adopting them broadly across their business while also identifying new ways to partner and gain the skills and capabilities necessary to outperform their competitors."

More information: For more information about the 2014 IBM Business Tech Trends Report, please visit: www.ibm.com/ibmcai/biztechtrends.

Provided by IBM

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