Research & Insights

Global Survey: Dispelling Six Myths of Consumerization of IT

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Executive Summary

We are witnessing a rapid shift in the way employees are using personal technology in the workplace. Smartphones, tablets and laptops, as well as social networks and online services that employees use outside the workplace are increasingly being used in business. This shift is forcing technology leaders to rethink the role and responsibility of IT in their companies.

In November 2011, Avanade commissioned a survey of 605 C-level executives, business unit leaders and IT decision-makers in 17 countries[i] to research trends surrounding the use of personal computing technologies in the enterprise. The following report identifies and dispels commonly held myths about the consumerization of IT – from executive-level resolve and available resources, to preferred device brands and the driving force behind the trend.

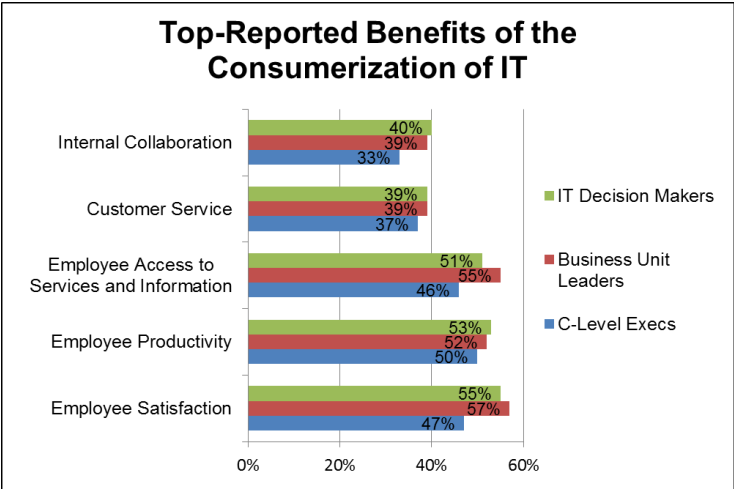## Myth 1: Businesses Are Resisting the Consumerization of IT
Key Finding: Enterprises are embracing the consumerization of IT change

Despite perceptions that companies and IT leaders are hesitant to embrace the consumerization of IT, Avanade's global survey found companies are in fact embracing the change and it is executives at the highest levels in the organization leading the charge.

Nearly three-quarters (73 percent) of C-level executives reported that the growing use of employee-owned technology is a top priority in their organization. From large enterprises to small companies in every industry surveyed, the research found sweeping adoption rates of personal computing technologies in the workplace.

Globally, 88 percent of executives report employees are using their personal computing technologies for business purposes today.

And, the majority of companies (60 percent) said they are now adapting their IT infrastructure to accommodate employee's personal devices, rather than restricting employee use of personal devices.

Top-Reported Benefits of the Consumerization of IT

	IT Decision Makers	Business Unit Leaders	C-Level Execs
Internal Collaboration	40%	39%	33%
Customer Service	39%	39%	37%
Employee Access to Services and Information	51%	55%	46%
Employee Productivity	53%	52%	50%
Employee Satisfaction	55%	57%	47%

CIOs and IT organizations have moved from gatekeepers of technology to enablers of innovative technology to meet individual employee needs and demands.

Myth 2: Companies Don't Have the IT Resources They Need to Manage the Consumerization of IT
Key Finding: Companies are investing in staff and resources to enable the consumerization of IT

Despite perceptions that companies are struggling to align resources with the new challenges and demands created by the consumerization of IT, research findings indicate companies in fact have many of the resources they need.

When it comes to IT infrastructure and support, 91 percent of C-level executives and 75 percent of IT decision makers said their IT department today has the staff and resources needed to manage the use of consumer technologies. Further, the majority of IT decision makers (62 percent) and C-level executives (84 percent) say it is a relatively simple matter to integrate the employee-owned devices, applications and online services into the enterprise IT system.

Companies are also making significant monetary investments. According to respondents, companies are allocating an average of 25 percent of their overall IT budgets to manage some aspect of the consumerization of IT. In addition to the resources and budgets already committed today, the majority of executives (79 percent) report they plan to make new investments to support personal computing technologies in the workplace within the next 12 months.

Myth 3: The Need to Attract and Keep Millennials is Driving the Consumerization of IT
Key Finding: Executives say allowing personal technologies in the workplace is not a strong recruitment or retention tool particularly among younger employees

Much has been made of the need for companies to embrace a "bring your own device" (BYOD) policy, specifically to accommodate younger employees and attract the best new recruits.

Yet, according to Avanade's survey, less than one-third (32 percent) of executives report they have changed company policies to make their workplace more appealing to younger employees. Further, only 20 percent of executives buy in to the idea that allowing personal computing technologies in the workplace will benefit recruitment and retention efforts.

Consumerization of IT has less to do with the worker and more to do with changes in the way that people work.

Avanade's survey also found that for executives, consumerization of IT has less to do with the worker and more to do with the way employees work.

When asked about the impact of personal computing technologies on company culture, the majority of executive respondents (58 percent) said the greatest result was the fact that their employees are able to work from anywhere, while 42 percent reported their employees are more willing to work after hours. The ability to work from anywhere was prioritized even higher (67 percent) by business unit leaders, who perhaps feel the most immediate impact of their team's workplace flexibility.

The findings show that productivity and anywhere access are rated significantly higher by companies over improved employee morale and providing greater responsibilities to younger employees.

Myth 4: Personal Devices in the Workplace Are Used for Checking Email and Browsing Facebook

Key Finding: Enterprise applications from CRM to ERP are finding their way to personal devices

There is no arguing that the advances in devices, ubiquitous services and specialized apps have changed the way employees use technology in the workplace. However, employees have evolved beyond using their personal devices exclusively to consume content – from checking email and surfing Facebook or Twitter.

While browsing email and social networking sites are still the primary uses for personal devices – 85 percent and 46 percent, respectively – core mission-critical enterprise applications are now finding their way onto employee-owned devices.

When asked which applications and services employees were using on their personal devices, executives cited customer relationship management (45 percent), time and expense tracking applications (44 percent) and enterprise resource planning (38 percent). This represents a major shift in the way enterprise technologies are being utilized by employees on their personal devices.

Corporate Applications and Services Used on Employee Personal Devices

Email	Social Networking	Customer Relationship Management	Time and Expense Tracking	Enterprise Resource Planning
85%	46%	45%	44%	38%
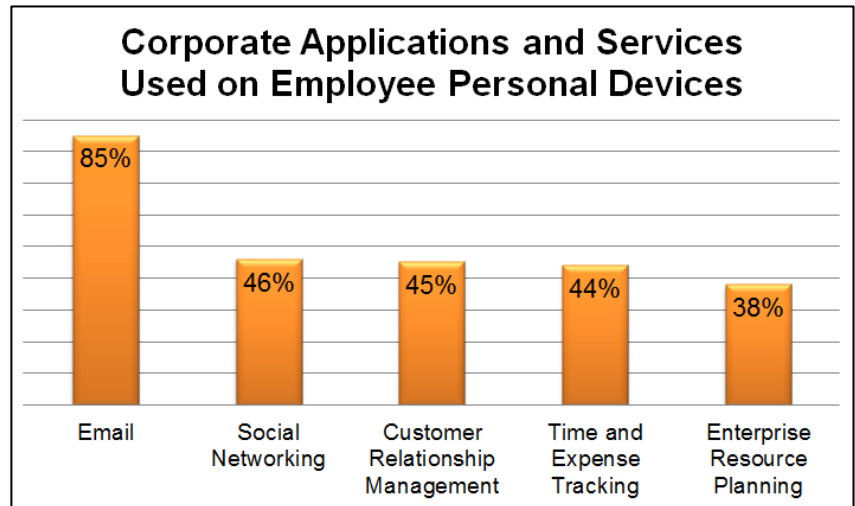
Further, the majority of business leaders support the shift from straight content consumption on personal devices. In fact, 65 percent of company leaders say creating content such as documents or applications is an acceptable use of employee devices in the enterprise.

Myth 5: Apple = Consumerization of IT

Key finding: Personal devices coming into the workplace are broad and diverse

Across media and industry discussions, iPhones and iPads have become synonymous with the trend of consumerization of IT. Research shows Apple is a factor in the consumerization of IT, but it is far from alone in driving the trend. In fact, the most popular consumer device that employees are bringing into the enterprise is not an Apple product.

It turns out the single most popular device is the Android phone. When looking more specifically at the device brands employees prefer, the top three reported were Android, Blackberry and Apple. When aggregating the full portfolio of devices including laptops, Apple leads the pack. The report also found that diversity of choice is important.

Top Three Employee-Owned Devices

When asked why their employees were [bringing their own technologies into the workplace](#), 25 percent of respondents said their company does not have the types of devices employees want, 25 percent of respondents noted their company's technologies do not have the capabilities employees want, and 20 percent of all respondents reported their company does not provide the brands employees want.

But companies are supporting their employees' right to choose. Nearly 40 percent of global respondents say they allow employees to bring any smartphone they want into the workplace and nearly 30 percent allow employees to bring any tablet they choose. Additionally, more than one-third of companies cover the entire cost of smartphones and tablets their employees are bringing into the enterprise.

Myth 6: Consumer Technologies with Built-In Security Measures are Safe for Use in the Enterprise

Key finding: Today, the majority of companies have already encountered a security breach as a result of consumerization of IT

Avanade's survey found that user-driven IT has the potential to create significant benefits for businesses, including new innovations for how employees work and how businesses deliver services. Further, consumerization of IT also enables greater flexibility for how employees access services and manage workloads.

However, alongside these benefits there are certain risks that can't be ignored.

Executives and IT are still working to put the right security policies, procedures, training and technology in place, given the rapid expansion of the consumerization of IT. Security measures have not kept pace with this trend. In fact, 55 percent of global companies report they have already experienced a security breach as a result of personal technologies flooding the enterprise. IT decision makers are particularly concerned with these risks, with 81 percent reporting their IT infrastructure needs some improvement in order to address these security concerns.

Across every industry, country and company size, [security is cited as the number one risk](#) of the consumerization of IT (66 percent), followed distantly by unmanaged data (37 percent).

Despite this concern, the majority of companies are not investing in training for their employees or IT staff to ensure their organizations are aware of – and better able to manage – the risks associated with the consumerization of IT.

Just over one-third (38 percent) of companies are investing in training their employees and even fewer (35 percent) reported they will invest in training for the IT staff responsible for protecting and managing critical IT infrastructures.

Beyond building awareness of security policies and procedures, Avanade's research revealed that compared to companies who are not investing in training, the companies making training investments are more likely to:
- [Realize greater collaboration](#) across teams (40 percent vs. 17 percent)
- Have employees who proactively solve problems (37 percent vs. 19 percent)
- Have employees who work after-hours (46 percent vs. 36 percent)
- See improved morale among employees (43 percent vs. 29 percent)

Unlocking the Power of the Consumerization of IT – Views from an IT Advisor

As the consumerization of IT becomes more widespread, business leaders are rethinking their long-held beliefs about the return on their technology investments, security needs and the impact of these decisions on improving productivity, recruiting and retaining employees and reducing operating costs.

Progressive CIOs and IT organizations have moved from gatekeepers of consumer technology to enablers of these innovative devices, applications and services. Enterprises have an opportunity to transform the role of IT from a reactive, risk-mitigation function into strategic enablers that leverage the breadth of today's powerful consumer technologies to drive business productivity.

So what steps should companies take to unlock the benefits of the consumerization of IT?

1. **Understand and Optimize:** The research highlighted the rapid expansion of consumer technologies in the enterprise. IT leaders need to understand the impact of this consumerization of IT on their organization. What employee segments are using personal technologies in the enterprise and how are they using them? Where do they work from and what devices and applications do they need to do their job?

    With this information in hand, IT leaders should develop a data-driven plan that enables their company to optimize their access strategies for their workforce and take advantage of this emerging trend. This includes identifying and prioritizing employee segments, defining work responsibilities and access requirements, and aligning the applications and devices that, if implemented, could improve productivity. This step also includes identifying training that can help accelerate implementation and improve business performance.

2. **Build and Extend**: Once enterprises have a clear picture of the requirements of their employee population, the current state of consumer technologies coming into their company and a plan for how they will align with the future state, they should start building the core applications and services needed to enhance employee performance.

    Today, the value of consumer technologies is vastly underleveraged. Most employees do not have access to the same business data on personal devices like tablets as they do on their company-issued computer. IT has an opportunity to create a continuity of experience on these devices and provide user experiences that leverage the diverse capabilities of these technologies (e.g. small form factor, location awareness, built-in camera and GPS). This does not necessarily mean a "rip and replace" of current applications, rather it is about extending existing application investments to capitalize on the new way employees work.

    Further, the majority of enterprise applications are not optimized for mobile devices and employees currently have to use workarounds to be able to access them. IT can take the lessons learned from the consumer app store model and apply that to meet the specific needs of the business environment. An enterprise app store should not only provide employees with a central portal to request an application across any number of devices – from laptops and desktops to tablets and smartphones – but should also have built-in approval processes and workflows.

3. **Manage the Change**: Just like any technology trend, the consumerization of IT requires a combination of people, processes and tools to ensure these new technologies are used safely and securely in a business environment and to effectively manage the program of changes being rolled out to the employee community.

    Part of this process requires creating intelligent policies that clearly outline how employees can use their personal technologies in the enterprise. For most organizations, this will require a significant cultural shift. IT leaders will have to relinquish some control and employees will have to recognize that they are accountable for the way they utilize their personal technologies in the enterprise. Additionally, they may need to be open to some level of monitoring and management of personal devices and technologies. These policies and practices should be reinforced by frequent formal and informal communications between IT and employees.

    Further, with the ever-changing portfolio of devices, IT should consider expanded security solutions which address end-points more broadly. Implementing security technology for specific

devices, platforms or operating systems will likely be fragmented, incomplete and short-lived. Enterprise device management capabilities and application distribution technologies should extend across all platforms and handle a diverse set of end-points.

The accelerating consumerization of IT trend offers incredible opportunities to create strategic advantage and business empowerment for enterprises. IT and business leaders must examine how consumer technologies are impacting their company today and then, build a roadmap that enables the organization to capitalize on the benefits these technologies can bring to the workplace.

Additional Resources
- Survey [Infographic](#)
- Avanade [Blog](#)
- Avanade YouTube Channel – [Consumerization of IT Playlist](#)

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[i] **Notes on Methodology**

The global survey on the consumerization of IT was conducted by Wakefield Research, an independent market research firm on behalf of Avanade, from October 25 to November 2, 2011. The 605 respondents include C-level executives (e.g. CEO, CFO, CIO, CTO), business unit leaders (GMs, heads of departments and functions, etc.) and IT decision-makers from 17 countries across North America, South America, Europe and Asia Pacific.

Small sized companies make up the majority of responses on a global basis, followed by large enterprises (similar in size to companies in the FORTUNE 1000). Companies surveyed span major industries, including aerospace, defense, energy, financial services, government, healthcare, logistics, manufacturing, media, non-profit, and telecommunications.