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Gartner Says Nexus of Forces Demands a Fundamental, but Necessary, Shift in Perspective

Special Report Shows Enterprises Must Rise to the Challenges of Emerging and Accelerating Consumer Behaviour

STAMFORD, Conn., 18 October, 2012 — Organisations of all types can harness the power of the Nexus of Forces to engage with their customers and staff, learn through the observation of behaviour and interaction patterns, and create compelling experiences, according to Gartner, Inc. These same organisations must disrupt many of their long-held positions and structures, all of which give way in the face of consumer-driven extreme collaboration.

In the Gartner Special Report, "[Engage, Learn, Create and Disrupt With the Nexus of Forces](#)," Gartner analysts describe the Nexus of Forces as the convergence and mutual reinforcement of four interdependent trends: social interaction, mobility, cloud and information. The forces combine to empower individuals as the forces interact with one another and their information through well-designed ubiquitous technology.

"The Nexus of Forces is a platform for engagement, the dissemination, collection and analysis of data, value creation and creative disruption," said Chris Howard, managing vice president at Gartner. "As such, the transformative nature of the Nexus will be felt across a multitude of industries and use cases — from new retail techniques to the democratisation of money."

Engage — The Nexus of Forces Is a Platform for Engagement

An engaged customer is a loyal customer, whereas a disengaged customer discards or circumvents quickly. The "customer" may actually be a customer, but may also be an employee, a partner, a citizen, a patient or a line of business. Traditional approaches to IT delivery, product development and marketing emphasise creating and "pushing" products to users. However, modern approaches to the same disciplines require deeper engagement with and "pull" from the user as consumer. Through deeper engagement, more valuable information can be targeted through a smarter push mechanism.

The Nexus of Forces enables reach, but does not guarantee engagement. That is because "reach" is primarily a technical challenge, whereas "engagement" requires design skills rooted in human-computer interaction (HCI), psychology, anthropology and related disciplines. Mobile devices and applications, cloud delivery mechanisms, and presence in social media create reach. The design, portability and usability of mobile applications; the contextually relevant delivery of information; and the integration with related user actions all create engagement. As such, the Nexus of Forces is a platform for engagement, and new skills are required to build on that platform.

The Nexus enables extreme collaboration in which collectives cluster around shared purposes and where reputations are won and lost. Networks of people consume and produce information that is contextually relevant and analytically useful. Increasingly, nonhumans (for example, sensors) are contributing data to

networks that aid real-time response and insight. In the Nexus of Forces, the human is not replicated by machinery (as depicted in early artificial-intelligence scenarios) but rather augmented by technology.

Learn — The Nexus of Forces Is a Platform for the Dissemination, Collection and Analysis of Data

As people engage with one another and their information, their patterns of behaviour are useful input for business decisions and deeper engagement. The Nexus of Forces is a platform for the dissemination, collection and analysis of data that brings value to all participants. Emergent tools and techniques can assist the organisation wanting to capitalise on this rich and complex information exchange.

Create — The Nexus of Forces Is a Platform for Value Creation

Leading organisations will use the Nexus of Forces to create compelling experiences that engage users and provide autonomy for information workers. As businesses foster engagement and observe patterns of behaviour within the Nexus of Forces, they will adapt to accommodate new opportunities. Through that accommodation, those businesses will deepen relationships with users while finding new ways to monetise those opportunities. Thus, the Nexus of Forces becomes a platform for value creation. The challenge for enterprise IT and vendors is that the hyperflexible nature of the Nexus of Forces makes traditional IT delivery and architecture increasingly obsolete. It also places stress on the IT workforce and skill set.

Disrupt — The Nexus of Forces Is a Platform for Creative Disruption

The Nexus of Forces is highly disruptive, not only to IT delivery, but also to many of the fundamentals of traditional business. These forces, driven by the consumer, threaten to disintermediate longstanding, previously unquestioned services and structures. Empowered with sophisticated devices and access to data and social networks, people are finding creative — if not wholly subversive — ways to reach their goals. These people are able to specify what they value in an exchange — for example, using mobile phone minutes as currency. They are able to build new applications on the platforms in their hands. They congregate around shared purposes and overthrow entrenched dictators. They capture global attention through the amplification of individual acts.

"The Nexus of Forces demands a fundamental shift in enterprise perspective," said Mr Howard. "This is not a simple shift, but it is essential for success in the technology-immersed world of the Nexus of Forces. Leading organisations use the Nexus of Forces to engage with their users and partners, learn from observing interactions, create compelling experiences and new sources of value, and embrace disruption."

Additional information is available in the Gartner Special Report "Engage, Learn, Create and Disrupt With the Nexus of Forces." The report is available on Gartner's web site at <http://www.gartner.com/technology/research/nexus-of-forces/>.

Mr Howard will provide additional analysis at the upcoming Gartner Symposium/ITxpo 2012.

About Gartner Symposium/ITxpo

Gartner Symposium/ITxpo is the world's most important gathering of CIOs and senior IT executives. This event delivers independent and objective content with the authority and weight of the world's leading IT research and advisory organisation, and provides access to the latest solutions from key technology providers. Gartner's annual Symposium/ITxpo events are key components of attendees' annual planning efforts. IT executives rely on Gartner Symposium/ITxpo to gain insight into how their organisations can use IT to address business challenges and improve operational efficiency.

Additional information for Gartner Symposium/ITxpo 2012 in Barcelona, 5-8 November, is available at www.gartner.com/eu/symposium. Follow news, photos and video coming from Gartner Symposium/ITxpo 2012 on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/#!/GartnerSymposium>, and on Twitter at http://twitter.com/Gartner_inc and using #GartnerSym.

Upcoming dates and locations for Gartner Symposium/ITxpo include:

21-25 October, Orlando, Florida: www.gartner.com/us/symposium

29-31 October, Sao Paulo, Brazil: www.gartner.com/br/symposium

5-8 November, Barcelona, Spain: www.gartner.com/eu/symposium

12-15 November, Gold Coast, Australia: www.gartner.com/au/symposium

5-7 March, 2013, Dubai, UAE: www.gartner.com/technology/symposium/dubai/

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