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Gartner Survey Reveals That 64 Per Cent of Organisations Have Invested or Plan to Invest in Big Data in 2013

Big Data Trends to be Examined at Gartner Symposium/ITxpo 2013, 10-14 November, in Barcelona, Spain

STAMFORD, Conn., September 23, 2013 — Big data investments in 2013 continue to rise, with 64 per cent of organisations investing or planning to invest in big data technology compared with 58 per cent in 2012, according to a survey by Gartner, Inc. However, less than 8 per cent of survey respondents have actually deployed.

"The hype around big data continues to drive increased investment and attention, but there is real substance behind the hype," said Lisa Kart, research director at Gartner. "Our survey underlines the fact that organisations across industries and geographies see 'opportunity' and real business value rather than the 'smoke and mirrors' with which hypes usually come."

The Gartner survey of 720 Gartner Research Circle members worldwide, which was conducted in June 2013, was designed to examine organisations' technology investment plans around big data, stages of big data adoption, business problems solved, data, technology and challenges.

The survey found that of the 64 per cent of organisations investing or planning to invest in big data technology in 2013, 30 per cent have already invested in big data technology, 19 per cent plan to invest within the next year, and an additional 15 per cent plan to invest within two years.

Industries leading big data investments in 2013 are media and communications, banking, and services. Thirty-nine per cent of media and communications organisations said that they have already invested in big data, followed by 34 per cent of banking organizations and 32 per cent of services firms. Planned investments during the next two years are highest for transportation (50 per cent), healthcare (41 per cent) and insurance (40 per cent). However, every vertical industry again shows big data investment and planned investment.

From a regional point of view, North America continues to lead investments with 38 per cent of organisations surveyed saying that they have invested in technology specifically designed to address the big data challenge. Asia/Pacific organisations were notably ambitious with 45 per cent indicating that they plan to invest during the next two years. Consistent with Gartner experience, EMEA and Latin America tend to lag in technology adoption, for which big data is no different.

Regardless of geography, investment typically has different stages that organisations go through. It starts with knowledge gathering, followed by strategy setting. The investment is small, and mostly consists of time. Then it is typically followed by an experiment or proof of concept. Still, the investment is small and tentative. Then, after completing a successful pilot, the first deployments take place. Here the investment curve rises. Over time, business operations start to rely on the deployments, and the investments move from implementing systems to managing them.

"For big data, 2013 is the year of experimentation and early deployment," said Frank Buytendijk, research vice president at Gartner. "Adoption is still at the early stages with less than 8 per cent of all respondents indicating their organisation has deployed big data solutions. Twenty per cent are piloting and experimenting, 18 per cent are developing a strategy, 19 per cent are knowledge gathering, while the remainder has no plans or don't know."

Looking at big data adoption for those organisations that have made investments, 70 per cent have moved past the early knowledge gathering and strategy formation phases and into piloting (44 per cent) and deployment (25 per cent). Among those planning to invest during the next two years, 80 per cent are in the earlier stages (knowledge gathering and strategy phase).

The survey revealed that there are a wide range of business problems being addressed using big data, although there are some clear patterns. In Gartner's 2012 and 2013 studies, business cases that improve process efficiency and business cases around customer experience dominate big data wish lists. In the 2013 survey, 55 per cent of organisations said that they are currently addressing enhanced customer experience using big data, while 49 per cent are using big data to address process efficiency.

Some of the big data activities are incremental to current business practices; for example, better understanding customer needs, making processes more efficient, further reducing costs or better detecting risks. These make up the majority of the use cases today. Some organisations are engaging in more "game-changing" activities; for example, 42 per cent are developing new products and business models, and 23 per cent are monetising information directly. This is encouraging, as Gartner believes that the big opportunities lie mostly in these areas.

"While there are many areas companies would like to address, a slightly different picture emerges when we ask about the priority of these categories," said Ms Kart. "Different industries have different priorities when it comes to big data. Industries that are driving the customer experience priority are retail, insurance, media and communications, and banking, while process efficiency is a top priority for manufacturing, government, education, healthcare and transportation organisations."

Just as big data priorities are changing, Gartner has observed that big data challenges shift with organisational maturity in information management, especially handling big data. Organisations are struggling most this year with knowing how to get value from big data, compared with last year's top challenge of governance issues. This is followed by difficulties in defining a strategy while obtaining skills; it also remains a critical issue for one-third of organisations.

"It is interesting to note that understanding 'what is big data' is the top challenge for 15 per cent of organisations," said Nick Huedecker, research director at Gartner. "Perhaps unsurprisingly, this concern came mainly from respondents with 'no plans to invest. Organisations should be sure they are educated about big data opportunities in their industry to ensure they are not missing the boat."

Additional information is available in the report "Survey Analysis: Big Data Adoption in 2013 Shows Substance Behind the Hype." The report is available on Gartner's web site at <http://www.gartner.com/resId=2589121>.

Additional analysis on big data trends will be discussed in more detail at Gartner Symposium/ITxpo 2013.

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 organization, 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 organizations can use IT to address business challenges and improve operational efficiency.

Additional information for Gartner Symposium/ITxpo 2013 in Barcelona, 10-14 November, is available at www.gartner.com/eu/symposium. Members of the media can register for the event by contacting Laurence Goasduff at laurence.goasduff@gartner.com.

Additional information from the event will be shared on Twitter at http://twitter.com/Gartner_inc and using #GartnerSym.

Upcoming dates and locations for Gartner Symposium/ITxpo include:

6-10 October, Orlando, Florida: www.gartner.com/us/symposium

15-17 October, Tokyo, Japan: www.gartner.com/jp/symposium

21-24 October, Goa, India: www.gartner.com/in/symposium

28-31 October, Gold Coast, Australia: www.gartner.com/au/symposium

4-7 November, Sao Paulo, Brazil: www.gartner.com/br/symposium

10-14 November, Barcelona, Spain: www.gartner.com/eu/symposium

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