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A Preview of the 2019 SIM IT Trends Study

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Editors' Comments

Guest Editorial: A Preview of the 2019 SIM IT Trends Study

Since 1980, the Society for Information Management (SIM), a co-founder of *MIS Quarterly Executive* and *MIS Quarterly*, in collaboration with a team of MIS academics, has conducted a survey of its members to identify and study the most important IT management issues. Over the decades, the SIM IT Trends Study has evolved and expanded into an insightful and comprehensive investigation of IT issues, management practices, and leadership. The study provides both practitioners and academicians with valuable trends analyses as well as a snapshot of the state of information systems (IS) management. This preview highlights a few topics from the 2019 study. The complete report will appear in the March 2020 issue of *MIS Quarterly Executive*.

Data collection was conducted over the course of nine weeks, from April to June 2019. During this period, the research team contacted 4,196 SIM members. A total of 1,033 completed responses were received (24.6% response rate), representing 618 unique organizations and 376 CIOs. SIM member organizations come in all sizes and from more than 30 different economic sectors with 21 sectors represented by 10 or more organizations. Organizations range from

early-stage private companies to well-established publically traded companies. Average revenue for participating organizations was just under \$4 billion and median revenue was \$400 million. The findings in this preview are those of the most senior IT executives of the 618 organizations.

Most Important and Most Worrisome IT Management Issues

Since its inception, the SIM IT Trends Study examines and reports on the IT management issues that are considered the most important to organizations and, more recently, the most worrisome to senior IT leaders. Participants were asked to choose up to five IT management issues or concerns from a list of 41 options. While some issues like “Security/Cybersecurity/Privacy” and “Alignment of IT and/with the Organization” have been highly rated consistently in both lists, there are discrepancies between the top concerns of IT leaders and those of their organizations. Figure 1 illustrates those differences.

The Largest IT Investments of Organizations

Participants were asked to select up to five areas/technologies from a list of 37 options in

Figure 1: Top-Five Most Important and Worrisome IT Management Issues

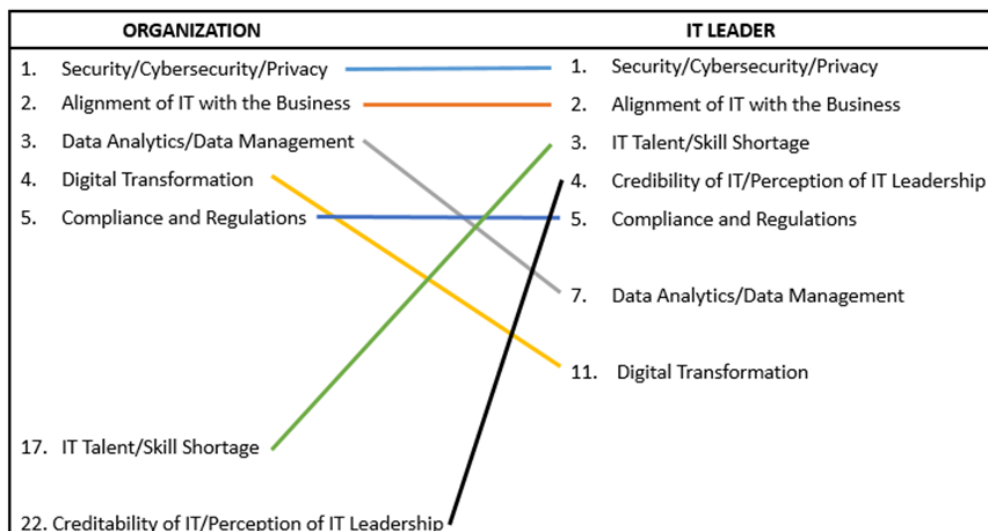


Figure 2: Information Technologies that Should Receive More Investment



each of three categories: (1) their organization’s largest near-term IT investments; (2) areas that should get more investment; and (3) areas of greatest concern to them personally. Investments in Analytics, Business Intelligence, and related technologies (such as Data Mining, Big Data, and Forecasting) continue to occupy the number one position for the eleventh consecutive year. Figure 2 depicts the relative frequency of responses for those technologies that “should receive more investment.” Interestingly, only two technologies (Analytics and Security) appear in the top five of all three lists.

Measuring IT Performance

Organizations use different metrics to measure IT performance. The questionnaire asked participants to select up to five (from a list of 34) of the most important performance measures used to evaluate their own performance as well as the performance of their organization’s internal IT and outsourced IT. The top performance measures for internal IT over the past decade have remained somewhat consistent. “Availability/Up Time” continued in the number one position for the fourth straight year and “Customer/User Satisfaction” retained the second position; “Cybersecurity Related” moved into third place, and “Cost Control/Reduction in IT” moved up to fourth place.

All This and More in the Next Issue of MISQE

The findings presented here reveal but a glimpse at a few of the findings of the 39th anniversary SIM IT Trends Study. If you are interested in knowing what keeps CIOs up at night, with whom they spend their time, and

what they spend it doing, as well as the spending, workforce, cloud, shared services, governance, and cybersecurity practices of organizations, then do not miss the March 2020 issue of the *MIS Quarterly Executive* and the complete report on these and many more topics, practices, key trends, unexpected results, and insights into the world of IT management and how it is evolving.

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