

Media Release

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Technology crystal ball gazers needed

The disruption to businesses and industries being caused particularly by mass consumerisation of IT is also affecting technology leaders. What is needed is for technology leaders to move up the influence curve.

That's a main finding of a new report based on interviews with 60 influential business leaders.

Key executives from almost every sector including banking, telecommunications, resources and government participated in The Donovan Leadership Big Kahuna Leadership Survey.*

Donovan Leadership director, Brian Donovan, said that supporting technology leaders to move up the influence curve will give businesses a competitive edge.

“The report shows that consumers now have significant computing power at their fingertips and they are using it in new and unexpected ways.

“They are influencing company reputations through social media, collaborating in unprecedented ways and driving changes in business models along the way,” he said.

“The Big Kahunas (60 business leaders) highlighted a tipping point which occurred about two years ago with the introduction of the iPad.

“Everyday consumers have spending and buying power. This is also changing the rules for technology leaders and bringing with it massive upheaval. The power has shifted. It's no longer about centralised business control of IT direction. Consumers and device manufacturers now have much more say.

“Technology leaders need to get closer to the business drivers and the markets they serve. There's a shift that technology leaders need to make to expand their influence. Companies are seeking good advice about their digital strategy to capture the opportunities of this new world.”

The Donovan Leadership report cites an IBIS World white paper predicting that 15 industry classes risk future failure unless they adapt and innovate, to support the view that businesses and industries are being massively disrupted.

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Donovan added: “What is clear from the survey is that technology leaders are themselves being forced to refocus. Technology leaders need to broaden their business and people skills as well as maintaining their grasp of technology. That will enable them to embrace the new era of consumer power. They will consequently also need to give up the level of centralised control they once exercised.

“In summary, 21st century technology leaders need to add to their repertoire to move up the influence curve. Technology leaders need to expand their influence on several fronts. They need to be able to influence company digital strategy, boards and senior executives, as well as their business colleagues, customers, suppliers and their own matrix teams.

Gerry Moriarty, Senior Communications Industry Adviser for Macquarie Capital and survey participant said: “As the speed of technological change continues to increase and its impact widens, the Donovan Leadership Big Kahuna survey provides a valuable insight into the challenges faced by companies and technologists to remain relevant and for executives and managers to keep informed and influential.”

* The Big Kahuna survey purpose is to ensure that Australian industries are better prepared to capture technology opportunities critical for business survival and economic growth. The report can be viewed at www.donovanleadership.com

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