Executive Summary Report

Creating Digital Value at Scale
The World's Most Influential Gathering of CIOs and Senior IT Executives from the GCC
Two words defined Gartner Symposium / ITxpo 2018: Innovation and Disruption

Enthusiasm for all things digital is at its peak. CIOs and Senior IT Executives were urged to buckle up for the inevitable “Trough of Disillusion,” as many initiatives will be successful while others will fail. Analysts urged CIOs to prepare for the wild ride ahead by expanding digital dexterity. It’s time to push digital innovation beyond experimentation to permeate the business, drive competitive advantage and deliver value. Sessions explored how to best leverage AI, IoT, APIs, industrialized digital platforms and other new technologies to scale the organization’s reach, relationships and people.

Throughout the event, industry luminaries, analysts and IT leaders reiterated the importance of speed and agility in a world where technologies such as cybersecurity, blockchain, real-time event streams and immersive technologies are accelerating the pace of change. In the following pages, you’ll find a summary of key take-aways to keep in mind as you rethink your IT strategy to scale digital business in the coming year.
Thank you for your contribution to a remarkable week

You made 2018 Dubai Gartner Symposium/ITxpo the most successful event we’ve ever put on in the Middle East region.

This conference brought together 600+ CIOs and IT leaders from the region to share a dynamic, rewarding experience. You helped us create an environment in which we could share thought provoking insights, practical, actionable advice and point you to the latest offerings from technology providers, all with the aim of helping you to successfully navigate the challenges of addressing your mission critical priorities.

At its core, Gartner Symposium/ITxpo 2018 was about learning how to master leadership in order to scale digital business through technology innovation. From AI, IoT and emerging platforms to cultivating a risk-tolerant culture, we looked at ways to stay ahead of disruption. Sessions also focused on dealing with growing challenges such as digital security and the IT talent shortage.

Thank you for your collaboration which meant that we learnt from one another, challenged one another and inspired one another to succeed in a fast-paced digital world.

For Gartner Symposium/ITxpo 2018, our goal was to create a contextually credible Symposium agenda which would be very relevant for the region and would deliver an engaging, fulfilling experience designed to help you face the future with new ideas, new strategies and new partnerships.

We hope you enjoyed your time with us and found it to be of value. Your feedback is important to us, so please email us at SymposiumMEFeedback@gartner.com to share your thoughts about this year’s event and how we might improve our program in the future.

We at Gartner are dedicated to providing you with the knowledge and insights you need to succeed in your role — and in life. We wish you continued success and look forward to seeing you again in 2019.

Sincerely,

Miriam Burt
Managing VP
Conference Chair, 2018 Dubai Symposium / ITxpo

P.S. Be sure to stay engaged with key concepts by revisiting sessions on Events on Demand and connecting with other attendees and Gartner clients on Gartner Peer Connect. As a reminder, you have access to all sessions on Events on Demand for a full year.
Creating Digital Value at Scale

H.E. Dr. Aisha Bin Bishr, Director General of Smart Dubai, the government entity spearheading Dubai’s city-wide smart transformation, inaugurated this year’s exciting edition and welcomed attendees by highlighting the importance of having such a powerful platform which brings together innovators from the public and private sector and showcase Dubai’s city-wide smart transformation plans which will have a positive impact on every industry.

Gartner's senior research executives opened the keynote with this observation, “Four years into the digital shift, we find ourselves at the peak of inflated expectations.” They then challenged attendees to embrace the urgency of digital and harness new key performance indicators (KPIs), role opportunities and scale accelerators to speed through that trough to the plateau of productivity. “This is critical, because if your organization is not both optimizing and creating new digital business models — or new ways to engage constituents or customers … you are falling behind.”

Some of the critical scale accelerators that CIOs can “unleash” to meet the urgency for transformation include:

1. **Digital Dexterity** is a new set of attributes and skills to allow you to operate successfully in a continuously changing digital world.

2. **Network Effect Technologies**, including blockchain, mixed reality (AR and VR) can help you create virtuous patterns of growth, where waves of disruption build upon each other, exponentially. For 2018, focus on IoT, APIs and artificial intelligence (AI).

3. **The Industrialized Digital Platform** includes the IT systems to run, customer experience to engage, things to sense, intelligence to decide, and the ecosystem foundation to interact.
The fundamental shift to broader-scale digital business requires that CIOs turn into executive leaders.

The Gartner 2018 CIO Agenda Survey of 3,160 CIOs in 98 countries revealed that success in digital business requires a shift from experimentation to the scaling of best practices. CIOs must match this scale in their own leadership.

In his session, Andy Rowsell-Jones, Vice President and Distinguished Analyst at Gartner Research, shared how the impact of digital transformation on the job of CIO and on the IT organization will be profound. In this new world, success is not based on what CIOs build, but on the services they integrate. The IT organization will move from manufacturer to buyer, and the CIO will become an expert orchestrator of services. This requires not only new technologies, but a skilled team, an organizational culture ready for transformation and a CIO ready to lead the business.
External Keynotes

Smart Dubai Vision 2021 – The Journey to Happiness

Wesam Lootah, CEO, Smart Dubai

A committed and talented Emirati, Wesam Lootah has more than 18 years of experience in strategic leadership positions where he has leveraged Information Technology to create innovative channels and Smart Government infrastructure to improve the quality of public services for citizens, residents, visitors and businesses in Dubai.

Wesam enlightened the attendees with Dubai’s ambition and vision to be the happiest and smartest city by 2021 through initiatives such as the Dubai Data Initiative, Blockchain strategy, the AI road map and more recently, the paperless strategy which aims to drastically reduce the amount of paper being used to transact with the government and save enough to feed 4 million children around the world, while giving an average of 40 hours in time back to citizens and residents.

He concluded his session by stressing the importance of businesses embracing advanced technologies and the evolution of IT executives or digital leader’s role in organizations from being a support function to driving the business. “Gone are the days when business heads and IT worked in silos, they are now looking at IT executives to drive innovation and reinvent the way their organization operates.”

Going Above and Beyond: How Much Risk is Enough

Felix Baumgartner, Austrian Skydiver, Daredevil and BASE jumper

Felix Baumgartner is a world record holder of the first human to break the sound barrier without the assistance of a vehicle. Part of the Red Bull Stratos Team, the mission resulted in a wide range of scientific findings, including the first physiological data ever captured about a human free-falling faster than the speed of sound.

In this adrenaline-rushing session, Felix shared his real-life experiences on dealing with leadership challenges such as persisting above and beyond your limits, the importance of team work and the art of taking calculated risks.

Being a professional daredevil, Felix stressed on the importance of mitigating risks and how this relates to enterprises – ensuring executives and business leaders are taking necessary precautions, factoring in every possible scenario and leading the team with a ‘No Limits’ mindset to overcome setbacks and successfully take the project from strategy to execution.
Talking about the various rate of cloud adoption in ERP, Christian cited how the Middle East is still catching up to its global counterparts with the example of ERPs being primarily used for HR and indirect procurement with reluctance to share sensitive data.

However, the study conducted showed that cloud may not always be the right answer for every organization but having a system that can be adaptable to classic and modern business scenarios is key and this may even lead to the adoption of two or more systems.

Based on the Gartner CIO survey, Tiny shared the results of cloud adoption in the Middle East, which lags behind western countries primarily due to lack of awareness around the use cases of public infrastructure as a service (IaaS), the absence of hyperscale cloud providers with physical data centers in the region and the regulation around the use of public cloud and data sovereignty.

According to Gartner Predicts research, by 2019, over 30% of the 100 largest vendors’ new software investments will have shifted from cloud—first to cloud only, which could potentially put Middle East-based organizations at an extreme disadvantage.
Top 10 Strategic Technology Trends for 2018

Gartner Top Strategic Predictions for 2018 and Beyond

- Consumers Favor Visual and Voice Search
- Digital Giants Self-Disrupt
- Legitimized Cryptocurrencies
- Increased Fake News
- Counterfeit Reality Overtakes Reality
- Bots Take Over
- Versatility Wins Over Specialization
- AI Creates More Jobs Than It Takes
- IoT in Everything
- Assume IoT Security Vulnerabilities

“Very interesting event! I really liked the sessions on Emerging Technologies such as AI and Robotics. The networking opportunities were great.”

VP, Riyad Bank
Attendees shared their ideas and insights with peers throughout the week.

Thought-Provoking Meetup Topics

- Driving Business Performance with Analytics
- Driving Digital Transformation in Oil and Gas
- AI Maturity & Experiences
- Women in IT - Negotiation War Stories and Best Practices
- CIO Meetup: Best Practices in Exploiting Cloud Computing
- Cost Optimization
- Aligning IT to the Business in Financial Services
- Digital Business in the Government Sector
- How Are You Leveraging Blockchain?
- Digital Innovation in Education

Peer Connect

Peer Connect is an online community exclusively for Gartner end user clients and Symposium/ITxpo attendees, where you can give and receive support from your peers with no vendor sales or marketing. Inside the community, you’ll be able to browse discussions or start your own, make connections with others in your industry or field and have access to relevant articles and templates created from member submitted content—all without any vendor influence or presence. You can access Peer Connect here: https://community.gartner.com/

Popular topics in member discussions include:

- Office 365 Migrations
- Blockchain
- Cybersecurity
- Artificial Intelligence
- Innovation
- Bimodal
- 2018 Technology Trends
- Agile
- Women in Technology
- IOT
- Analytics
Special program highlights

Industry Sessions

Attendees learned how IT trends will impact their particular business segment and prepare to seize emerging opportunities today. Below are a few highlights from each industry:

**Banking & Investment Services**

Banks seeking to transform themselves and engage in digital business heard Gartner’s financial services vision for 2030; how to win in a platform world; the competition from new challengers; and how core banking systems are moving to the next generation.

**Education**

Attendees heard about emerging technologies and their impact on higher education, as well as about modernization strategies for their legacy administrative and learning management systems.

**Government**

Attendees were given both practical advice to progress in their current digital transformation, as well as a long-term view of how technology may shape organizations and service delivery to make their current strategies more future-proof.

**Oil & Gas**

The oil and gas culture resists change, so industry attendees heard how they need to learn from different industries and ask different questions to impact digital transformation.

**Retail**

Retailers are in turmoil and looking for leadership on driving digital transformation strategies. The session explored the use of advanced analytics technology to enhance the customer experience along with digital technologies to ensure pricing, promotion and offers are consistent across channels.
ITxpo highlights

Thank you to the 30 exhibitors, who offered attendees their leading-edge solutions that aligned with the key priorities of the CIO.

Special ITxpo features included:

• Gartner stage sessions
• Emerging Technologies solution providers
• ITxpo receptions
• Face-to-face exhibitor meetings

To learn more about opportunities to exhibit, please contact us: +971 5 0558 2924 or middleeast.exhibits@gartner.com.
# Gartner Symposium/ITxpo 2018 by the numbers

## Top 5 Job Titles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CIO</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>18%</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>C-Level Executive</td>
<td>8%</td>
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</table>

## Top 5 Industries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Industry</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Banking</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Technology &amp; Telecom</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Energy &amp; Utilities</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Services</td>
<td>8%</td>
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## Top 5 Attending Countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>United Arab Emirates</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Oman</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bahrain</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Company Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>XX-Large</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Government or PS</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>22%</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>X-Large</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>XX-Large</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
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## Snapshot of attendees and agenda

Gartner Symposium/ITxpo 2017 had an increase in the number of CIOs attending with their leadership teams, confirming that it is the most important gathering of CIOs and senior IT executives.

- **3 days**
- **600+ attendees**
- **253 CIO Experience attendees**
- **24 Gartner analysts**
- **30 solution providers**
- **100+ sessions across 6 tracks**
- **3 Keynotes**
- **1,188 tweets using #GartnerSYM by 374 individuals**
- **35 journalists onsite**
- **22 pre-event press releases**

For conference details, visit gartner.com/me/symposium.
Analyst one-on-ones

Throughout the 3 days, over 450 one-on-one meetings were conducted with Gartner analysts.

Top 10 one-on-one topics

- Cloud computing
- Digital business/digital workplace
- CIO leadership
- Data analytics and BI strategies
- CIO organization models, IT governance and strategic execution
- Application strategy and governance
- Security and risk management
- Customer relationship management and customer experience
- Enterprise architecture and technology innovation
- Artificial intelligence

“...The event helped me learn new approaches to digital transformation while providing critical insights into IT budgeting.”

CIO, Aljomaib Automotive Company
Your post-event resources

Get the latest IT news

From ecosystems driving digital growth to artificial intelligence to the art of saying no, our robust online library of research, reports and news offers a fascinating look at digital business trends, forecasts and success stories. Visit gartner.com/smarterwithgartner for details.

Missed a session?

Video recordings of featured sessions from Gartner Symposium/ITxpo 2017 in Orlando can now be accessed through Gartner Events On Demand for up to one year, post-event. Visit gartnereventsondemand.com/event/symme6, log in using your Gartner username and password, and access expert advice throughout the year. Email eod@gartner.com with any questions or support needs.

To view the complete list of 2018 Gartner events, visit gartner.com/events.

Plan to join us again next year!
Sign up and be notified when registration opens.
4 - 6 March, 2019

Gartner Symposium/ITxpo 2018

September 16 – 19, Cape Town, South Africa
October 14 – 18, Orlando, FL
October 22 – 25, São Paulo, Brazil
October 29 – November 1, Gold Coast, Australia
November 4 – 8, Barcelona, Spain
November 12 – 14, Tokyo, Japan
November 13 – 16, Goa, India

Gartner Research Special Reports
Get insights into major business and technology trends that will help you stay ahead and make smarter decisions for your organization in the coming year.

See the latest