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Inbox Insight conducted a survey of senior IT professionals from major UK companies, polling their views on BPM (Business Process Management) trends in the Digital Age. The survey was conducted in Q3 2015, and was sponsored by leading BPM software provider PNMsoft.

162 IT leaders completed the survey.

In this report, we'll examine the survey results, and come to conclusions regarding emerging BPM trends.

Questions 1 and 2: Revenue and Cost Savings

The initial two questions are connected, so we'll discuss them together:

These results indicates that a majority of IT leaders believe Business Process optimization can provide a significant impact on the business bottom line, generating over 15% added revenue, and saving over 15% in costs.

While only a minority believed these values to be over 30% (where cutting costs exceeded revenue potential), even a 15% or greater revenue/cost reduction value is highly significant for the overall performance of the business.
This underscores the now already widespread understanding that **Business Process optimization is of vital importance** to a Business’s ability to survive and thrive in today’s Digital landscape.

**Question 3: Business Moments and Hot Processes**

‘**Business Moments**’ is a concept that Gartner introduced this year (2015), as a way to highlight the disruptive, sometimes unpredictable changes that occur during windows of time within a business ecosystem. Examples could include bad weather that interrupts a business trip, an opportune real estate deal, or a drastic change in a stock or currency. (See ‘**Architect Your Business to Sense, Respond and Create Business Moments**’ by Betsy Burton, Gartner – 17 April, 2015). The ability of an organization to detect and respond to Business Moments is seen by Gartner as a critical business opportunity. See this article for more information.

The concept has hit Twitter as well:

‘**Hot Processes**’ is a new term coined by PNMsoft to identify a major sub set of business processes. Hot Processes are dynamic processes that are of critical impact to the business. These are processes which require frequent changes to resources in order to optimize their performance and their business result.

While only a minority of respondents acknowledged that their own business is driven by these two factors (Business Moments and Hot Processes), it is a **significant** minority. In particular, we would not expect such a significant minority of IT leaders to have already become aware and accustomed to these two very new concepts. The fact that over 1/3 of respondents said...
“Yes” or “We are moving towards that directions” indicates a developing trend, and we expect that over the next 1-2 years, this trend will continue, particularly as these two concepts become more widely recognized in the mainstream perception.

**Question 4: Low Code and Citizen Developers**

‘Low-Code BPM’ has been highlighted by Forrester BPM analyst Clay Richardson, as a developing trend in BPM. Low-Code does not mean zero code, rather it means that developers can create BPM applications with very little actual coding, as the vast majority of the functionality is available out-of-the-box, through the BPM suite’s graphical user interface (see this article for more information). Low-Code can empower “Citizen Developers” (a Gartner term, to denote a technically-oriented business user who is not a classic IT programmer) to develop BPM applications with relative ease.

Here, the response is starker. At the moment, most large UK companies are not employing Low-Code BPM via citizen developers, and are not planning to do so in the near future. This can mean one of two things – either the majority of BPM suites are not currently equipped for low-code/citizen development, or they are built for such development, but the organizations still prefer traditional coded development by IT teams. It may be that the actual situation is a mix of both options.

BPM suites continue to move in the direction of Low-Code (PNMsoft’s BPM suite is a prime example), but IT projects are also becoming more and more complex, necessitating the involvement of advanced developers. We hope that in future surveys, we will see an increase in Low-Code BPM use, and we are also aware that several PNMsoft customers do conduct BPM development by business users in a Low-Code framework.
Question 5: Key Focus in Coming Year

This question generated the widest distribution of replies, implying that all of the above foci are important for today’s leading companies.

What is notable, is that Operational Efficiency and Improved CX can both lead to gaining a Competitive Advantage.

A majority of respondents, by not choosing ‘Gain Competitive Advantage’ in their reply, in effect have understood that in order for their business to succeed, they must focus on these prerequisite steps first (CX or Operational Efficiency).

We do note a trend in 2015 (not directly connected with this survey) toward greater focus on CX, and we’ve published a recent white paper on how BPM can transform CX.
Question 6: Company Size

This question gives an indication of the size of the respondent’s company, with a majority of respondents working in companies that are above 1000 employees, and over a 26% working for companies above 10,000 employees. As a company grows in size and complexity, the need for optimised business processes grows exponentially.

Summary

In conclusion, this report shows that UK IT leaders are focusing on optimizing their business processes, realising that such optimisation is of critical impact to their business. New concepts such as Business Moments and Hot Processes are beginning to have an effect on business planning, although Low-Code BPM and citizen development have yet to make a dent in IT leadership and project methodology. Finally, IT leaders are realising the importance of improving CX and Operational Efficiency in the success of their Digital Business.

Thanks for your interest in this survey.

Eli Stutz, Head of Knowledge and Collaboration

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