

Press release
November 2016

Innovation a high business priority for Singaporean companies

- 95% of Singaporean CIOs are implementing measures to boost innovation in their company in the next 12 months
- Singaporean companies rate themselves in the upper mid-table of the innovation scale with an average score of 3.7 out of 5
- 47% will employ IT talent with unique skills to build a more innovative business over the next 12 months

Singapore, XX November 2016 – Singapore has long been at the top of global rankings¹ when it comes to embracing innovation. According to an independent survey from specialist recruiter [Robert Half](#), Chief Information Officers (CIOs) are increasingly embracing the innovation trend, with 95 per cent implementing measures to boost innovation in their company over the next 12 months.

Less than one fifth (14 per cent) of Singaporean CIOs believe their company is highly innovative and give themselves a score of 5 out of 5 when it comes to their level of innovation in the organisation. The majority still believe there is room for improvement as the average score given by CIO's was 3.7 out of 5.

Matthieu Imbert-Bouchard, Managing Director Robert Half Singapore said: *“The high percentage of companies further pursuing innovation confirms Singapore’s place as one of the most innovative countries in the world.”*

“Innovation is a high priority for Singaporean companies looking for ways to contend with regional competitors that often have lower cost structures. By embracing innovation Singaporean companies can maintain their competitiveness and capture increased market share.”

How Singaporean companies are boosting innovation

The overall majority of Singaporean companies are taking measures to boost innovation with an approach that consists of a combination of both technology and people. Data infrastructure tops the list with more than half (55 per cent) of the Singaporean CIOs planning to build more data centres to leverage data more efficiently. Human capital comes in second as almost half (47 per cent) plan to hire new IT talent with unique skills for the purpose of building a more innovative business. More than four in ten (46 per cent) will reshape network infrastructure to improve operational processes, followed by 43 per cent who are developing new software.

Measures CIOs will take to build a more innovative business over the next 12 months

Building data centres to leverage data more efficiently	55%
Employing IT talent with in-demand/unique skills	47%
Reshaping network infrastructure to improve operational processes	46%
Developing/enhancing software	43%
Developing new technology tools to improve customer experience (e.g. App development)	38%
Focusing on a more collaborative work environment	27%

Source: independent survey commissioned by Robert Half among 100 Singaporean CIOs – multiple answers allowed.

“The main driver of innovation is technology with mobile, cloud, and big data technologies allowing companies to deliver better services and improve their productivity. Leveraging these technologies can be the catalyst for innovation by optimising the customer experience, automating processes and enhancing employee efficiency.”

¹ See <https://www.globalinnovationindex.org/>

“To foster an innovative culture, companies will not only need to continuously invest in their technological infrastructure, they also need to make sure they have the best human resources to develop, optimise and support IT initiatives in order to maximise the return on investment in technology ,” Mr Imbert-Bouchard said.

With all of the Singapore CIOs surveyed (100 per cent) saying that it is challenging to find skilled IT staff, having an innovative corporate culture can serve as a point of difference to attract and retain top IT talent.

“Singapore’s skilled IT professionals are keen for opportunities where they can have a meaningful impact by developing and driving innovation so they are more attracted to companies who are expertly communicating their focus on innovation. Given the current IT skills shortage, companies with a visibly innovative culture therefore have an advantage over their competitors in attracting and retaining the best IT employees,” Mr Imbert-Bouchard said.

Robert Half suggests the following tips for encouraging innovation:

1. **Capture ideas:** By failing to capture and note creative ideas as they are formed, businesses could miss out on valuable innovative solutions.
2. **Encourage employees to speak up:** Every employee needs to feel encouraged to speak up and contribute their views on how to make innovative improvements to the business.
3. **Create a culture of innovation:** Leaders must foster a culture that supports new ideas. This includes developing clear structures and processes to identify and implement innovation.
4. **Develop the talent in your organisation:** Staff development is integral to innovation. It promotes innovation skills like personal responsibility, understanding of errors and visionary thinking.
5. **Remove the barriers:** Innovation relies on both financial and technological possibilities. IT must support innovation with modern technologies – like data analytics and cloud technology – and remain attractive to IT professionals at the same time.

##

Notes for the editor

About the research

The annual study is developed by Robert Half and conducted in April 2016 by an independent research company, surveying 100 CIOs/CTOs in Singapore. This survey is part of the international workplace survey, a questionnaire about job trends, talent management and trends in the workplace.

About Robert Half

Robert Half is the world’s first and largest specialised recruitment consultancy. Founded in 1948, the company has over 325 offices worldwide providing interim management, temporary and permanent recruitment solutions for accounting and finance, financial services and technology professionals in Singapore. More information on roberthalf.com.sg.

Follow Robert Half Singapore



Read related articles on our [Robert Half’s work life blog](#)



Why digital transformation needs to be on your radar

Digital transformation represents the new wave of opportunities that can be leveraged to implement change through technology. As a matter of survival, organisations will need to adapt to digital transformation to stay a step ahead. Read more here.



The growth of big data and its opportunities

Big data offers big potential. It's an area of IT offering enormous possibilities for business organisations, and as companies race to make the most of everything big data has to offer, career opportunities are unfolding for IT professionals. Not so long ago the term 'big data' was rarely understood outside IT circles.

For more information

Gabrielle Nagy
Public Relations Manager Robert Half Asia Pacific
gabrielle.nagy@roberthalf.com.au
+61 02 8028 7751

Lorraine Chua
Rubicon Consulting
lorriane@rubicon.com.sg
+65 9819 9151