



Cybersecurity a key investment priority for Australian CIOs: Adobe survey

Majority (87%) of CIOs placing high priority on cybersecurity with more than two-thirds (69%) foreseeing increased investment

Sydney, Australia – July 23, 2020: New data released by Adobe today found that Australian Chief Information Officers (CIOs) are responding to the increased public awareness and government focus on cybersecurity. Adobe's [CIO Perspectives Survey](#) found that a majority (87%) of CIOs are placing a high priority on cybersecurity issues after almost all organisations (98%) faced some kind of cybersecurity-related issue last year.

Consequently, more than two-thirds (69%) of CIOs foresee increased investment in this area, and a third (33%) plan to increase headcount in cybersecurity. The most prominent cybersecurity issues for Australian organisations were phishing (76%) and shadow IT (45%). They also saw an increase in website hacking (50%) and data breaches (22%) over the past year.

Conducted in association with Advanis, the Adobe [CIO Perspectives Survey](#) captures how CIOs are helping their organisations be successful in the new world, by sharpening their focus on cybersecurity, technology investments, and workforce engagement.

Suzanne Steele, Managing Director for Adobe Australia and New Zealand said, "The importance of data security and privacy is not new, but the accelerated digital transformation that has happened in response to COVID-19 has propelled it to the top of many boards' agenda. As we rapidly move from functioning in an increasingly-digital world to one that is digital-only, it is imperative to build consumer trust by protecting their personal data and treating it properly.

"At Adobe, the security of customer data and digital experiences is our priority. To better protect our customers, we've implemented hundreds of security processes and controls across the board to help us comply with industry-accepted standards, regulations, and certifications."

Response to COVID-19

While majority of business operations across Australia (87%) have seen a direct impact on customer activities during COVID-19, most CIOs remain optimistic about the future and the agility of their businesses. More than three-quarters (78%) are positive about their organisation's ability to find success in the post COVID-19 economy.

Australian businesses were incredibly quick to adapt to COVID-19 with three-quarters (73%) of CIOs stating they were able to develop a plan within a week of restrictions being enforced. Of these, almost all (98%) were able to implement those plans fully or partially. Further to this, nine in 10 (91%) CIOs claimed their organisation was well equipped to work effectively, even in a remote setting.

However, some of the key challenges cited by CIOs in terms of business continuity are security (28%) and supporting a remote workforce for long-term (26%).

Investment in AI and automation

"The current global situation has put technology at the forefront and accelerated adoption. Three-quarters of Australian CIOs have already invested in new technologies to solve for the challenges posed by COVID-19, with almost all (98%) focusing on automation to enhance efficiency in times to come," said Suzanne Steele..

Adoption of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning (AI/ML) is high with nine in ten (89%) organisations implementing an AI or ML project in the past year. However, data-related issues were listed as the biggest challenge in the implementation of AI.

Workforce Reboot

Many organisations expect a negative impact on hiring due to COVID-19, although interestingly, they still plan to increase headcount across cybersecurity and privacy, AI/ML/automation, R&D, and infrastructure. When it comes to hiring new talent, softer skill sets are coming to the fore, along with technical expertise. Skills such as teamwork (73%), design (62%), creativity (60%), and leadership (51%) are as important as analytical skills (73%), project management (49%), and customer knowledge (47%).

CIOs also understand the importance of upskilling their workforce with 78% already undertaking measures to ensure their employees are adept at handling new-age technologies.

Planned Investment

More than half (57%) of CIOs stated their planned financial investments have decreased because of COVID-19.

While AI/ML (36%), data management (33%), infrastructure (31%) and public cloud (31%) continue to remain top priorities for a significant number of organisations, some other areas including edge computing (7%) and headcount (16%) have been deprioritised as compared to pre-COVID-19.

Conducted between April 24 and May 7, 2020 - the CIO Perspectives Survey captures insights from 55 CIOs in Australia in firms from 100 employees to 5000+ employees. For more insights on how CIOs across Australia are leading operations and planning for the future, see the full report [here](#).

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About Advanis

[Advanis](#) is a member of the Canadian Research Insights Council (CRIC) and confirms that this research fully complies with all CRIC Standards including the CRIC Public Opinion Research [Standards](#) and Disclosure Requirements. This research was sponsored by Adobe and conducted by Advanis. For information about data collection, please contact Lori Reiser (lori_reiser@advanis.net 519.340.0125)

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