

4 Tech trends to watch for in 2019

 By [Esti Kilian](#)

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It's that time of year again when everyone in the tech industry takes out their crystal balls and starts making predictions about what's going to happen in the industry in 2019. I'm already bracing myself for the flood of buzzwords: Big Data. Artificial Intelligence. Virtual Reality. Robotics. Blockchain. Even the Fourth Industrial Revolution.



Esti Kilian, head of business development and marketing at Itec South Africa

Make no mistake, they're all incredibly exciting. And they're certainly starting to change the world. But right now, they're not the issues that are going to keep the CIOs of most South African businesses awake at night. Here's my view of the top four tech trends that will impact local businesses in the coming year.

Cybersecurity

2019 is going to be the year of cybersecurity. This is a discussion we're having with 80% of our customers right now. Whether you're a small business or a large enterprise, it's not a case of if you will be attacked anymore, but when. The sheer number of threats we are exposed to, and the number of people who don't do anything about it, is terrifying.

As technology embeds itself into every part of our businesses and society, we're going to have to take cybersecurity best practices a lot more seriously. And ensuring your company's crown jewels are secure isn't just important for your own purposes: it's required by a growing raft of compliance regulations.



How CISOs can maintain corporate privacy

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Part of the challenge is that many companies still see data security and compliance as a cost, a grudge purchase or a box-ticking exercise. To us, it's the exact opposite: it's a saving if you consider the staggering impact and cost of data breaches

on companies. The bottom line: the more responsive your cyber-security is, the safer you are.

Simplicity

At Itec South Africa, we like to talk about simplicity as the new disruptor. With the economy tight, a lot of companies are wary of investing in new technologies right now, but business goes on. They've got to keep the lights on and the telephones, security, content management, CRM and ERP working.

The clear trend we're seeing, which is only going to increase in 2019, is a return to simplicity as a strategy to weather the recession we're in. From a business point of view, this means getting the most value possible from their IT assets and investments at the lowest cost, and the greatest flexibility.



E-commerce needs ERP

10 Oct 2018



For vendors, the challenge is to provide packages of services, as it were, that make it easy for their clients to use as and when they need them – and without the burden of big capital expenditures. It's outsourcing on steroids and with a keen insight into the business' needs. IT systems updated and operating at the optimal level. Reduced hardware costs. Security maintained. Staff freed up to focus on customers and execution.

Internet of Things

I know, I know. This one's a bit *buzzword-y*. But while IoT has been talked about a lot for several years, it's finally getting real, and coming into its own as a real business tool.

IoT is all about sensors collecting data. This data allows us to measure and quantify things that weren't possible before – and once you can monitor and measure something, you can better manage it. This ability to optimise IT and business operations, based on data, is hugely exciting to companies. For example, you can monitor the capacity and performance of every single document output device in your company, and get real business intelligence and insights into their usage. The result: you save money.



The opportunity of IoT

Sean Laval 8 Nov 2018



There are now more than 15 billion IoT devices in the world, and that number will double by 2020. Investment in IoT is expected to be five times that of AI and big data combined. Do you want to know where companies are spending their tech funds this year? You're looking at it.

User experience

In a world that's digitising by transforming by the day, our customers are increasingly looking for technology and systems that support their vision of a great user experience, both for the internal and external customer.

For the internal customer, it's the small things that count. Like an app that is loaded onto your mobile phone that allows forwarded call to come to your mobile, resulting in faster response times and less admin. Or drivers using company data via the app, as opposed to general data purchased.

Externally, it's about giving customers simple experiences that talk to their needs, provide immediate access to goods and services, and put the customer's experience first. How? Through elements like 24/7 customer service, the ability to make more informed shopping decisions, and by focusing on the platforms that customers prefer (usually mobile).

ABOUT ESTI KILIAN

Esti Kilian is head of business development and marketing at Itec South Africa. She is a seasoned senior marketing executive, leader and strategist, with expertise in B2B, Channel and B2C marketing.

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