A brighter picture - Some optimism and thoughtful investment…but cost control still important

Remit's fifth annual Property IT Survey set out to discover:

- ▣ Whether companies are still under the same pressure to cut costs;
- ▣ If outsourcing strategies have begun to converge;
- ▣ How Advisers and Investors differ in their approaches to IT.

We also extended our survey further to cover software use and attitude to cloud services, and for the first time included some questions about social media.

HEADLINE RESULTS

IT Spending and Costs

- ▣ The majority of organisations reported static or increased budgets compared to the previous year, indicating a more optimistic outlook and plans for investments that have perhaps been put off over the last couple of years.

- ▣ However, some organisations are still driving down costs per user, with a few regular respondents showing a large decrease compared to the previous survey.

- ▣ Investors continue to provide a higher number of IT support staff per user than Advisers, and have correspondingly higher costs per user.

- ▣ Advisers on the other hand are spending a higher percentage of turnover on IT, primarily because of the higher reliance on IT and intensive data processing performed in providing their services to clients.

Outsourcing

- ▣ Advisers are tending to outsource even more IT services compared to Investors, with outsourcing of data storage particularly showing an increase this time.

- ▣ As with our previous surveys, there is still a wide disparity in the services being outsourced from organisation to organisation and within the Investor and Adviser groups.

Social Media

- ▣ A surprising 50% of firms already have Social Media policies but a quarter have no plans to develop a policy.

- ▣ LinkedIn and Twitter are the sites are most commonly used for business purposes; Facebook is the most blocked site, indicating its clear popularity for personal use.

Software Use and Cloud Services

- ▣ Property organisations still prefer to buy outright rather than purchase software as a service, and internal rather than external hosting of software continues to be more popular.

- ▣ There is still low adoption of CRM and document management solutions (compared to traditional property and accounting systems) despite the importance of client management and large levels of documentation within organisations.

- ▣ The most popular infrastructure procured as cloud services is servers for processing and for data storage but the idea of development platform services has not yet caught on.

A full report on the survey results is provided to participants. If you would like more information or would like to provide your own data for benchmarking against our sample, please call us.

Remit Consulting's fifth annual survey of the top property advisers and investors had 14 participants (12 from the UK and 2 from The Netherlands).

The survey is based on a short set of questions dealing with:
- IT Costs
- Level of outsourced services
- Software used in the business
- How software is procured
- Other IT trends

We retain a core set of questions each year so that comparisons can be made over time and trends tracked, and add further questions to gauge where the property industry is in adopting new software and services.

As ever, please do **contact us** to discuss any of the topics covered here:

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