Gartner: "Flat" Government IT Spending for 2013

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Gartner projects a "slight" decrease of -0.1% in WW government IT spending for 2013, changing previous forecasts of 0.2% growth as organisations continue to struggle against weak economic development.

However the analyst still points out 3 areas ripe for investment-- mobile, IT modernisation and cloud.

"Cloud computing, in particular, continues to increase compared with prior years, driven by economic conditions and a shift from capital expenditure to operational expenditure, as well as potentially more important factors such as faster deployment and reduced risk," Gartner says. "Other areas, such as data centre consolidation, are lower on the list than in previous years, perhaps demonstrating that they may have met resistance in a more strategic rollout. Vendors should be ready to reposition offerings according to these changing market dynamics."

According to Gartner 30-50% of surveyed organisations (based in 13 countries including the UK, Germany, Russia and the US) are either planning for or already have an active IT services contract within the next 12 months. Future rollouts include SaaS, IaaS and PaaS implementations.

Mobility is top priority, with strong demand from agencies with more decentralised staff, large field workforces or specialised needs (such as border patrol agents, inspectors and social

works). A next wave of technology adoption should develop once agencies need to replace existing hardware with new mobile infrastructure and devices.

Momentum is also growing for BYOD programs, even if question remain-- 52% of surveyed organisations allow employees to take own smartphones to work, 50% allow laptops, and 38% tablets, as security and governance concerns limit pace and adoption.

Big data is not yet high priority for survey respondents, but is gaining interest as a means of gaining efficiency and effectivenes.

"Government organizations have increased big data spending for improper payment systems, indicating the desire to tackle fraud, waste and abuse within agencies, as well as target upfront errors in revenue collection," Gartner concludes. "While agencies are assessing how to manage, leverage and store big data, not many have addressed the challenges associated with the utilization of content and the issues associated with merging large amounts of data onto a single platform."

Go IT Spending Priorities in Government WW 2013 (Gartner)