

Press Release

European organisations look to prioritise efficiency savings over staff cuts as economic recovery approaches, finds Canon research

- Senior decision makers across Europe recognise importance of boosting staff productivity and efficiency ahead of cost cutting measures to ride wave of recovery
- Half of all organisations have made changes within the last year in direct response to the changing economic conditions, but a third admit to not being prepared for the coming 12 months
- Organisations need to recognise the influence of IT in achieving efficiency savings

LONDON, 23 September 2009. Canon Europe, world leader in imaging solutions, has today launched the results of Pan-European research, which paints a positive picture of organisations looking to review internal processes ahead of other cost cutting measures, such as staff redundancy, as the economy recovers.

Encouragingly, of the 1,800 senior decision makers questioned across a range of public and private sector organisations, 59% stated that boosting staff productivity and efficiency was a current core objective; this is in contrast to just 30% who are considering cutting costs by reducing staff numbers. Assuming the economy continues to show signs of recovery right across Europe, the main priorities for organisations will be to continue to review processes (42%), to recruit more staff (37%) and to increase training budgets (30%).

However, despite this renewed optimism, 30% of senior decision makers claim that they are not prepared for the coming 12 months, with exactly a third of these (33%) putting this down to being focused on today rather than looking ahead and 22% citing a lack of management experience. There is better news for Denmark and Finland with over 80% of organisations claiming to be ready for recovery.

Half of all organisations have made changes within the last year in direct response to the recession – 14% of senior decision makers are now looking at lessening their environmental impact and 13% want to improve information security, suggesting that the focus remains squarely on efficiency and cost cutting.


Commenting on the research, Adam Gillbe, European Strategic Marketing Manager, Canon Europe Business Solutions said, “We wanted to explore the current thought processes of senior decision makers across a wide section of public and private sector organisations and the results of the research have been very interesting. There is definitely a more positive outlook towards economic recovery and many organisations are realising the importance of improving internal processes to boost staff productivity ahead of cost cutting measures such as staff cuts.”

However, despite this focus on improved efficiency it seems that many organisations are not aware of how to achieve it – 19% of those questioned said that they have seen no change in their efficiency savings over the past 12 months with 45% seeing less than a 5% saving. This could be partly down to the fear or perceived difficulty of integrating new systems within existing IT frameworks – singled out as the biggest IT challenge by 48% of respondents.

Gillbe continues, “There is a clear opportunity for European organisations to make some simple, cost-effective IT changes that will have a dramatic impact on reducing costs as well as improving workforce efficiency. We’re not talking about a complete overhaul of systems but rather encouraging organisations to really think about the way any new technology investments support their organisation and their staff. We understand our customers’ challenges such as increasing efficiency and integrating new IT investments within existing systems. New technologies such as Canon’s imageRUNNER ADVANCE are designed to address these challenges and support the creation of a truly digital office.”

As organisations make their way through these tough economic times, decision makers are calling on their staff to be enterprising; in other words to exhibit initiative and resourcefulness. The research reveals a large split across Europe between those incentivised by financial reward, dominant in Czech Republic, Finland, France and Poland, and those who are driven by pride in their job, as is the case in Austria, Denmark, the Netherlands and the UK.

Gillbe concludes, “The findings reinforce the need for technology to help staff perform more efficiently and to the best of their ability. As the economic recovery takes hold, organisations that are well-prepared and have invested in appropriate technologies will be well-placed to prosper in the year ahead.”



Canon's new imageRUNNER ADVANCE platform of multifunctional printers (MFPs) is due for launch across Europe from November 2009.

- ENDS -

Key pan-European research statistics

- Seven out of ten organisations have made changes over the past year to help them prepare for changes in future economic conditions
- Boosting productivity and efficiency of staff is a core objective for 50% of organisations
- Finland and Poland are most incentivised by financial rewards; Netherlands and Austria by pride in their job
- Over 40% of organisations will continue to review processes as the economy improves
- Spend on IT and office equipment has decreased or stayed the same for 81% of organisations in Europe
- 48% see integrating new systems within the current framework as the biggest IT challenge
- Increasing or maintaining customer satisfaction is the single biggest challenge organisations face - 54%

About Canon Europe

Canon Europe is the regional sales and marketing operation for Canon Inc., represented in 120 countries and employing over 11,000 people across Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA).

Founded in 1937 with the specific goal of making the best quality camera available to customers, Canon's tireless passion for the Power of Image has since extended its technology into many other markets and has established it as a world leader in both consumer and business imaging solutions. Its solutions comprise products, ranging from digital compact and SLR cameras, through broadcast lenses and portable X-ray machines, to multi-function and production printers, all supported by a range of value added services.

Canon invests heavily in R&D to deliver the richest and most innovative products and services to satisfy customers' creative needs. From amateur photographers to professional print companies, Canon enables each customer to realise their own passion for image.

Canon believes that considering the interests of society and the environment is an integral part of good business practice. This is embodied in its corporate philosophy Kyosei - 'To live and work together for the common good'.

Further information about Canon Europe is available at:
www.canon-europe.com



Media enquiries, please contact:

Anna Collins

Canon Europe

t: +44 (0) 20 8588 8434

e: anna.collins@canon-europe.com

Helen Gough or Tim Lines

Nelson Bostock Communications

t: + 44 (0) 20 7792 7424

e: helen.gough@nelsonbostock.com