'Global ICT spending to hit R100trn' says Rectron CEO

In a recent forecast, [Gartner predicted an 8% increase](#) in global information and communications technology (ICT) spending for the year, reaching an estimated R100trn. This growth comes despite the challenges posed by geopolitical tensions, regulatory shifts, and economic uncertainties.

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Spencer Chen, CEO of Rectron South Africa, highlighted the distinctive factors at play within the South African market. "South Africa's unique conditions are set to shape local investment strategies in the burgeoning ICT sector," he remarked, pointing to the country's specific market dynamics amidst the global trends.

Artificial intelligence and the workplace

Unsurprisingly, artificial intelligence will continue to take centre stage in the business environment, public spaces and across every area of consumers lives. In fact, according to Gartner, AI will drive the majority of IT spending growth.

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Crucially, AI will also continue to have a major impact on the world of work. A recent study found that 45% of European workers expect their jobs to be severely impacted by AI and while we do not have similar studies for South Africa, it is safe to assume that our workforce may harbour similar doubts.

Despite these concerns, it is far more likely that AI, especially generative AI like ChatGPT and others, will augment rather than replace human capital. The World Economic Forum (WEF) counts GenAI as one of its top emerging technologies.

> *A powerful type of AI that can create newand original content by learning patterns in data, using complex algorithms and methods of learning inspired by the human brain.*

This has wide-reaching ramifications for frontline and middle managers. The pandemic forced many firms to do some soul-searching about the role of managers as hybrid and remote work styles emerged.

The growth of AI will certainly help support various management functions, the recognition of the importance of inclusivity and how to manage neurodiverse teams will necessitate the development of skilled managers.

Continued growth of cloud services

Many companies now have their entire IT infrastructure in the cloud and that is only set to continue. In fact, 59% of tech executives said that they expect most or all their IT environment to be in the cloud next year.

Many companies simply do not have the time, expertise, or inclination to invest the required capital into onsite IT infrastructure and that has led to the proliferation of "as-a-service" models.

As this trend continues, 2024 will see even more organisations opting to put their money into cloud-based services.

Green energy will gather steam

As a response to the energy crisis that has affected developed and developing nations alike, green energy products should be considered a global responsibility to reduce carbon emissions.

The inevitable benefits of going green include more energy independence at the corporate, public, and household level. However, a long-term sustainable solution that integrates all spaces aims to reduce the burden of resource industries on the environment and eradicate noxious emissions.

"The ICT industry is subject to rapid changes driven by technological advancements, regulatory shifts, market demands and global events. The past has shown that the world can change in an instant, emphasising the importance of resilience and staying well-informed as the ICT industry navigates the variety of changes for the coming year," concludes Chen.