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Top Technology
Trends for CFOs
in 2017





The office of finance is changing at a rapid pace – and technology will have a significant impact on the role over the coming year.

2016 was a breakthrough year for technology. We saw voice recognition, chatbots and artificial intelligence surge. And now we're seeing companies across the board put these technologies to use to revolutionize the workplace, homes, schools, and more.

So what's on deck for the top technology trends of 2017 and specifically for the CFO? CFOs will have a lot to contend with this year and technology will have a big role. You will be dealing with the new revenue recognition standards – how to comply and meet the 2018 deadline. You will be seeing business models get more complex and billing frameworks multiply. And you will see the customer experience take on a whole new meaning given the emphasis on subscription renewals. And that's just a tease.

We've outlined the top six technology trends for CFOs to watch and how to capitalize on them in 2017.

1 The services economy will become “THE Economy”

In 2017, more than half of all companies will be based entirely on services-related revenues, and approximately 90 percent of businesses will earn more than half of their revenue from services. That includes professional services, subscription-based services, service-level agreements, managed services and usage-based contracts.

The shift to services and the importance of subscription renewals in 2017 will place a greater emphasis on customer experience, making it critical that CFOs become more engaged in customer satisfaction, retention, and renewals, as well as product development. The acceleration of the services economy will begin to reshape the Fortune 500, and businesses that are underprepared for the changing business model will be overtaken by more forward-looking organizations.



2

CFOs get hands-on with customer experience

More and more businesses are shifting from product and single transaction sales to service and subscription models. That means CFOs will be thrust out of the back office and into active customer-facing roles. And one bad customer experience can send a customer for life straight to your nearest competitor. Customer experience is now everyone's business. To support this customer experience focus, successful software companies will be required to deliver tools that consolidate billing sources, support and automate new revenue models, and provide end-to-end visibility across the customer lifecycle.



3

Revenue recognition will drive CFO technology adoption

The new revenue recognition accounting standards will further drive CFOs dependence on cloud technology. In the same way that FATCA (Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act) drove financial institutions to adopt secure managed file transfer technology, IFRS 15 and ASC 606 (designed to improve statement comparability and reduce complexity) will prompt the next wave of technology upgrades and drive more companies to migrate to the cloud.

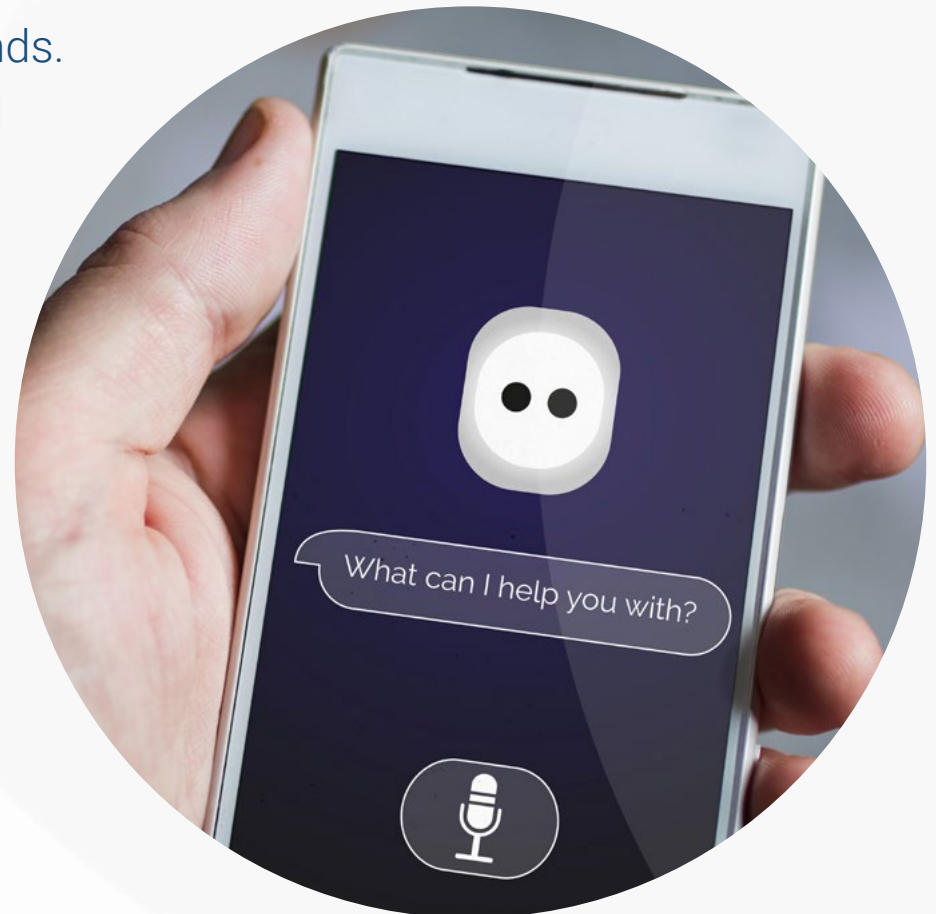


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Smart assistants break out of the echo chamber

Voice control will explode in the workplace in 2017. Smart assistants like Cortana, Alexa, and Siri now have the capabilities to take business action on voice inputs. Thanks to powerful artificial intelligence and voice recognition frameworks, clever developers have the tools to create systems that check the status of project deliverables, run reports and respond to business information through simple voice commands. These 'digital assistants' will inevitably find their place in the enterprise.

We've already seen a couple of use cases with Atlassian launching a HipChat Alexa integration where developers can make changes to code or fix website issues just with voice commands. FinancialForce recently showcased an Alexa enterprise resource planning assistant helping push finance into the 'future of work'.



5 Software will need to do more than just log data

The days of entering data into business applications and then exporting a pdf are over. The bar has been raised and SaaS applications are now expected to have analytics and intelligence baked in to enable real-time, actionable insights.

In 2017 business intelligence services will empower CFOs with previously unseen visibility into every dollar recognized and dollar planned, and allow for critical decisions in an informed and predictable manner. New systems will meet user demand for detailed business optics, billing forecasting, and revenue tracking. Business users will also demand their applications automate cumbersome workflows and allow real time answers, collaboration, and data-driven decision making.

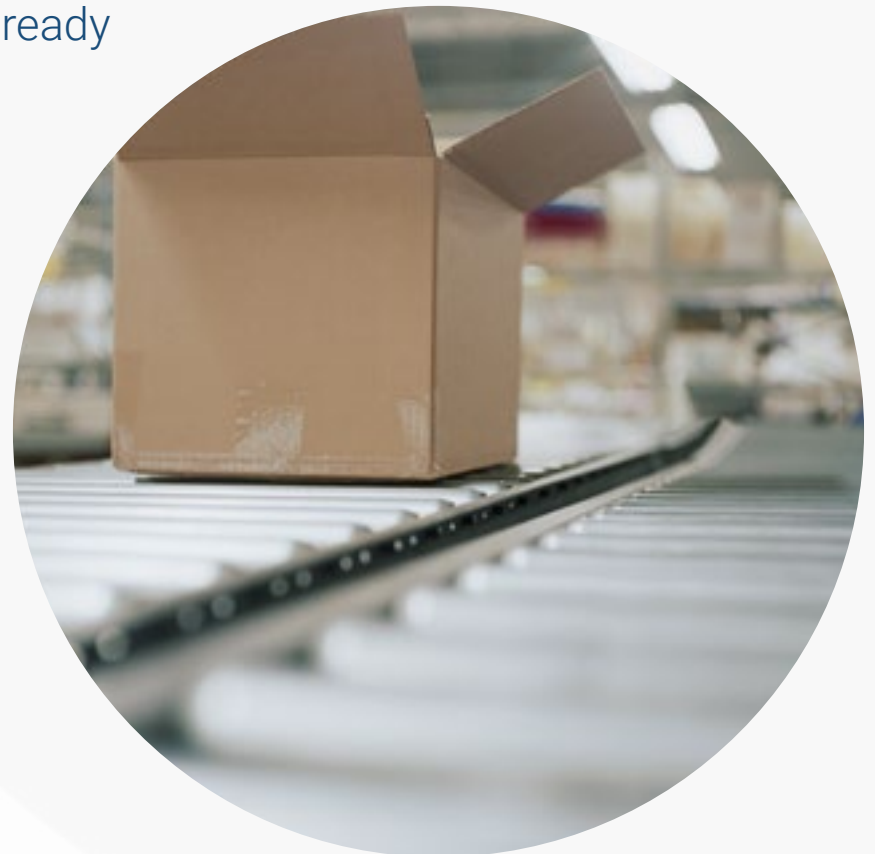


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Planning for global change

With the incoming Trump administration and uncertainty around trade, business leaders must prepare for four years of both domestic and international instability. Politically, many should start planning to ensure preparedness for regulatory uncertainty and protectionism. If your company specifically manufactures abroad, you'll want to start shoring up trade deals with overseas contracts.

CFOs and their finance offices will need to be ready to analyze and prepare for whatever impact political, economic and societal events may have on their organization. This is where business intelligence software and services become a priority, as finance teams need to have predictive algorithms and tools that can better equip them for strategic planning. The right tools will give finance departments real-time information, leading to smart, nuanced and nimble decisions.





The Modern CFO

The days of managing finances on an Excel spreadsheet are drawing to a close and we stand at the precipice of the cognitive computing, cloud era. It's an exciting time to be a CFO. The office of finance is changing at a rapid pace, and technology is set to have a significant impact on the role over the coming year. Smart CFOs should be thinking about how these trends will impact their business and how new technology can be applied to improve efficiency and customer visibility, and ensure compliance.

About FinancialForce

Founded in 2009, FinancialForce is the leading Cloud ERP vendor with apps built entirely on the Salesforce Platform. The company's Financial Management, Professional Services Automation (PSA), and Human Capital Management (HCM) offerings provide services-centric businesses with a platform that organizes sales, services, finance and HR entirely around their customers. Headquartered in San Francisco, FinancialForce is backed by Salesforce Ventures, Technology Crossover Ventures, Advent International and UNIT4.