



The Top Three Big Data Trends Impacting LA Employers In 2019

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It is no surprise that advances in technology continue to affect how businesses operate. Southern California is no exception. Big data, when leveraged systematically and effectively, can improve operational efficiencies, provide real-time views of market conditions, tailor customer experiences based on behavior and, ultimately, increase the bottom line. These are wins for any organization.

To remain relevant and competitive, leaders of large and small companies alike must continue to embrace emerging technology. I consider myself an early adopter and I like to experiment with new products and technology to find out if they can make my life (or my team's lives) easier or our business more productive.

Here are three big data trends for Los Angeles employers to keep an eye on this year.

- **Predictive analytics will drive business decisions.**

The rise of big data is easily connected to consumers' increasing reliance on the internet, smartphones and tablets to do everything from purchasing groceries and clothing to signing up for health insurance, scheduling doctor's appointments and a variety of other timesaving, transactional activities. Most of the websites and apps consumers are using today track and collect data, which in turn identifies the products and services that align with a given behavior. This allows companies to create a complete behavior profile for each of their customers. The profile data predicts how consumers will interact with the organization, its products and its services. Smart organizations use this information to drive greater consumer engagement.

At my company, we use predictive analytics to customize our offerings. Behavioral data helps us develop products and services that might appeal to our customers. In my view, we have just scratched the surface when it comes to predictive analytics. I expect it will continue to play an important role in driving business decisions in 2019, and for the years to come.

- **Embracing automation creates a productive (and profitable) workforce.**

The term automation was created by the automotive industry about 1946 to describe the new technology being used by manufacturers to accelerate production lines. A fear then -- and now -- is that automation could replace jobs. A recent Los Angeles Times article discussed a recent report by the Brookings Institution that considered the impact of automation on jobs. While it suggests machines may take over some human tasks in the future, how that happens is likely to vary dramatically by job function and region. Jobs for which 70% of tasks can be performed by machines are likely automation candidates; that's about a quarter of jobs. Another third (36%) could face medium exposure, while the rest of the workforce is less vulnerable.

At the same time, you also have to consider the positive effects of increased automation. Automated systems in day-to-day life save time and increase efficiency. This allows business owners to spend more time on the people who power their business. That, in turn, leads to a more profitable and likely happier workforce.

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- **Expansion of connected devices increases the flow and accessibility of information.**

Personal devices like smartphones and tablets allow consumers to instantly access a variety of information at any given moment. While visibility into personal health data may not be critical to see on a daily basis, having access when it's needed creates peace of mind. Providing customers access to their personal information — in my industry, this means medical records, prescription drug history and other health-related information — enables people to make better decisions for themselves and their families.

On the business side, greater information flow leads to valuable customer insights, which allow companies to refine their processes and develop tools to meet the diverse needs of their customers.

As technology continues to evolve, so too will business practices. Staying ahead of the curve, or at least in line with it, could be the difference between surviving and flourishing.

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