



CANADA'S SMALL BUSINESSES GET A BOOST

Entrepreneurs accelerate time to market and more using CANARIE's Digital Accelerator for Innovation and Research (DAIR) Program

[Ottawa, Ontario, February 15, 2012] CANARIE, Canada's Advanced Research and Innovation Network, today announces the findings from the DAIR pilot program and seeks input from Canada's digital entrepreneurs on the next phase of the program.

The DAIR pilot program was launched in spring 2011 and hosted over 40 users. As part of the wrap-up of the pilot phase of the DAIR program, CANARIE surveyed those users who cite the **speed, scalability and security of the program as its biggest benefits**. Other results of the survey showed:

- Participants used DAIR primarily to launch products or services to market;
- New digital products were generated using the cloud resources of DAIR;
- Most participants had never used a cloud-based service like DAIR before;
- Participants made a significant investment of time to use DAIR, and
- DAIR created additional project opportunities and greatly improved product launch readiness.

"Our vision for the DAIR program is to directly lead to more innovation, more development and therefore more Canadian products on the market and it has done just that," says CANARIE's Senior Director, Technology Innovation Mark Wolff. "The DAIR pilot program provides more than cloud computing resources. DAIR provides valuable experience on how ICT can deliver business results, thereby strengthening Canada's position in ICT and commercialization of innovative digital products and services."

51.4% of Canadian small businesses believe that using the Cloud will help grow and improve their business.

Source: The State of the Canadian SMB, ITBusiness.ca Special Report, 2011

Some of the spin-off benefits noted by users include:

- Participants modified their business model to incorporate cloud resources after experiencing the benefits and value first-hand through DAIR;
- DAIR provided users with valuable information on how to provision for cloud resources. Users typically underestimated their testing time requirements;
- High performance computing resources and the ability to test virtually and at less cost, allowed users to test their products and services when they otherwise would have been unable to do so.

CANARIE operates Canada's ultra-high-speed network, thousands of times faster than the Internet, which enables world-class research and discovery at universities, colleges, research hospitals, government labs and private sector research facilities across the country.

DAIR is a testbed environment in which small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the high-tech sector can design, prototype, validate and demonstrate pre-commercial technologies faster and cheaper than ever before. In the pilot phase of the program, there was no charge to users of DAIR.

Cloud computing is catching on with Canadian small and medium-sized businesses as a way to offload the burdens of buying and maintaining ICT.

Source: *Technology: Your Competitive Edge* is published by the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC), 2011

Led by CANARIE, DAIR is possible through strong partnerships with Alberta's Cybera, Compute Canada, and Quebec's RISQ network. These partnerships deliver an advanced technical environment enabling large-scale simulations that ordinarily are difficult – or even impossible – for SMEs to carry out.

CANARIE intends to expand the program, and has incorporated this proposal into its mandate renewal request to the Government of Canada. In order to build the most beneficial program for SMEs, CANARIE is looking for feedback from digital entrepreneurs across the country on how best to meet their cloud-computing needs. CANARIE's survey may be found [here](#).

A [short video is available](#) that provides a user perspective on DAIR.

For more information on DAIR, including a way to indicate your interest to participate in the next phase of the program, [visit the CANARIE website](#).

- 30 -

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About CANARIE:

CANARIE Inc. is Canada's Advanced Research and Innovation Network. Established in 1993, CANARIE manages an ultra high-speed network that supports leading-edge research and big science

across Canada and around the world. One million researchers, scientists and students at over 1,100 Canadian institutions, including universities, colleges, research institutes, hospitals, and government laboratories have access to the CANARIE Network. Together with 12 provincial and territorial advanced network partners, CANARIE enables researchers to share and analyze massive amounts of data, like climate models, satellite images, and DNA sequences that can lead to groundbreaking scientific discoveries. CANARIE is a non-profit corporation supported by membership fees, with the major investment in its programs and activities provided by the Government of Canada.

CANARIE keeps Canada at the forefront of digital research and innovation, fundamental to a vibrant digital economy. For additional information, please visit: www.canarie.ca.

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