Cloud Services Market Research: Carl West Reviews what GFK are doing.

Author [Ian Charles](mailto:ian.charles@managedserviceexpert.com)

GFK are a market research company known mainly for their work in the retail sector supplying data about technology product sales through the retail chain which they collect by collating EPOS data. GFK are now actively engaged in taking on more products, more product areas and specifically include trade sales to provide more accurate data to their client base. GFK sell their data and expertise to manufacturers such as HP, Acer etc. in the form of sales figures based on categories of product for instance screen size, battery type, weight, geographic sales etc. which segments and analyses the markets by the features that consumers are actually buying and in this way manufacturers are able to respond to meet these demands. This differs from other data which confirms what the channel (manufacturers and distributors) are shipping.

GFK have of late been building additional B2B product sets in addition to their “traditional” core business of retail sales analysis gathering information on the basis of a confidential free data exchange IT resellers, IT mail order houses meaning they can now deliver data on business sales. In turn this has meant a broadening of their reporting with wider product ranges and more product areas meaning they can deliver more accurate data to the manufacturers who are their ultimate customers.

The main area of growth has been the addition of cloud services to the sales tracking data they provide. The main problem here was with definitions; what exactly are and by extension what are not, cloud services? Definitions of the cloud vary with each individual giving their own personal view on what it is. GFK have their found way around this by segmenting the market into SaaS, PaaS, IaaS, Marketing as a Service etc. and in so doing they aim to define the market and so gauge the true size of the market for cloud services as a whole.

In turn this has changed their focus to take account of who the “manufacturer” now is. Until now GFK have made their money from hardware vendors, people who build the kit retailers sell. With the cloud, the “manufacturers” who will buy, pay for and use the data are the service providers themselves i.e. the originators of these managed services.

Interesting that Carl uses the term MSPs to mean managed service providers; again this is term I would regard as contentious; I think Carl and by extension GFK means the XSP market with managed service providers being companies that deliver remote support for clients who pay on a recurring revenue basis.

What GFK are doing in the cloud is a is really interesting extension of their core business and I can see me interviewing Carl pretty regularly!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qSxWQWzv1cc&feature=youtu.be>