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technologies top the list of profession's technology hard trends that will impact the accounting and finance world over the next three years, according to research ...

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Big Data, artificial intelligence, Robotic Process Automation (RPA), and cloud technologies top the list of profession's technology hard trends that will impact the accounting and finance world over the next three years, according to research conducted by the Maryland Association of CPAs, the Business Learning Institute, and world-renowned futurist Daniel Burrus.

The research began with Burrus's "Top 20 Technology-Driven Hard Trends Shaping 2018 and Beyond." Using Burrus's annual list as a starting point, MACPA Executive Director Tom Hood asked more than 3,000 CPAs and finance and accounting

professionals which of those trends will have the greatest impact on the profession

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8. Smarter smartphones and tablets
9. Blockchains and cryptocurrency
10. Virtualization of desktop and storage

“This year’s list saw some major changes as Big Data analytics rose to the top of the list, replacing artificial intelligence and cognitive computing,” said Hood. “Advanced cloud computing and mobile applications rose a few slots, indicating the increasing number of cloud applications and adoption by the accounting and finance profession.

“Keep in mind that these are Hard Trends, or future facts that will happen whether we like them or not,” Hood added. “Dan Burrus distinguishes these from the ‘Soft Trends’ that may happen. These core concepts are being used by accounting and finance professionals to see the visible future and identify opportunities before we get disrupted by the exponential pace of these technologies.”

“These trends highlight enormous, game-changing opportunities in a broad array of applications and industries,” Burrus said. “As you read through them, look for opportunities for you to leverage them and become a positive disruptor.”

“One more word of advice,” Hood said. “Don’t stop at the trends impacting your firm or company. Stop and think about how these trends are impacting your clients and customers, both internally and externally. Think about the Hard Trends facing your industry and your customers’ industries. Read the entire list and think about robotics and 3D printing, augmented and virtual reality, the Internet of Things, location-based services, drones, and wearables.”

These seemingly individual technologies are joining forces to disrupt the accounting and finance profession exponentially. The impact of artificial intelligence is huge,

but when combined with blockchain, for instance, its impact increases tenfold ... at

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accelerate their ability to be proactive and use these trends to their advantage. By learning to anticipate disruptions, problems, and game-changing opportunities, you can proactively shape the future of your career and organization from the inside out.

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