

IT trends 2025: industry report

Why IT is long on challenges
but short on time





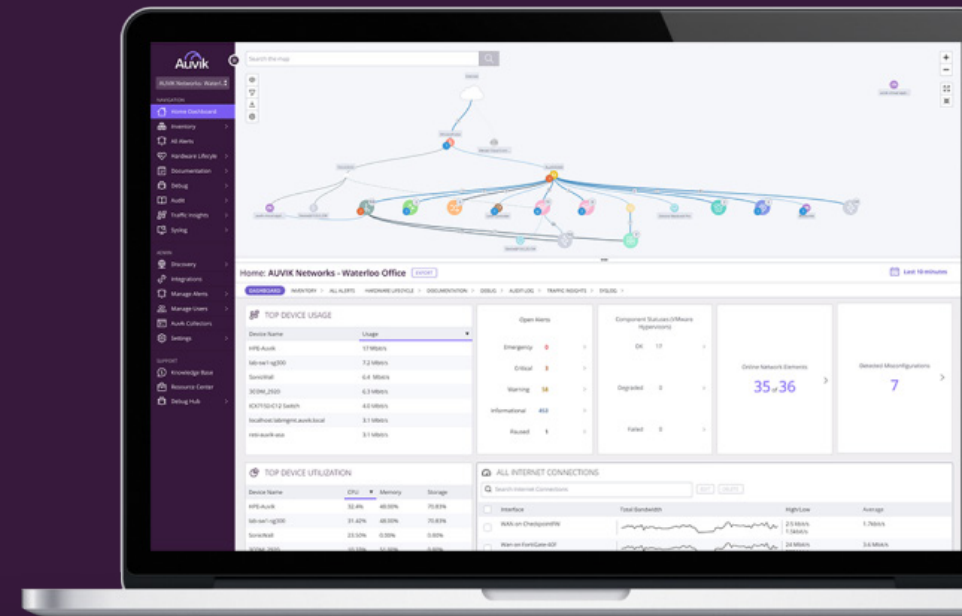
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About Auvik

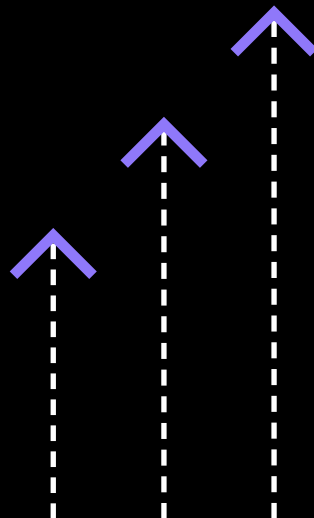
A cloud-based IT management platform, Auvik helps IT departments proactively manage their networks, endpoints, and SaaS applications.

Auvik manages one million network devices and three million SaaS applications across 100,000 networks, and provides monitoring services for more than 10 million devices.



Executive summary

It's time for the generalists to keep up with the tools, and the burden of work to be eased by growing budgets and expanding technology possibilities.



In this report we'll reflect on the changing landscape of IT over the course of 2024 and into 2025. Key takeaways will be highlighted after each section for succinct summarization of the findings, but consider reading through for a detailed look at the metrics that matter to your peers.

IT has become a fraught industry, dealing with a shortage of talent and expertise, and a rise of generalists who are limited in the time they have in their day for researching the field. With an increasing eye on end-user experience, remote IT delivery, and advancing AI tools, there is a lot on IT professionals' plates.

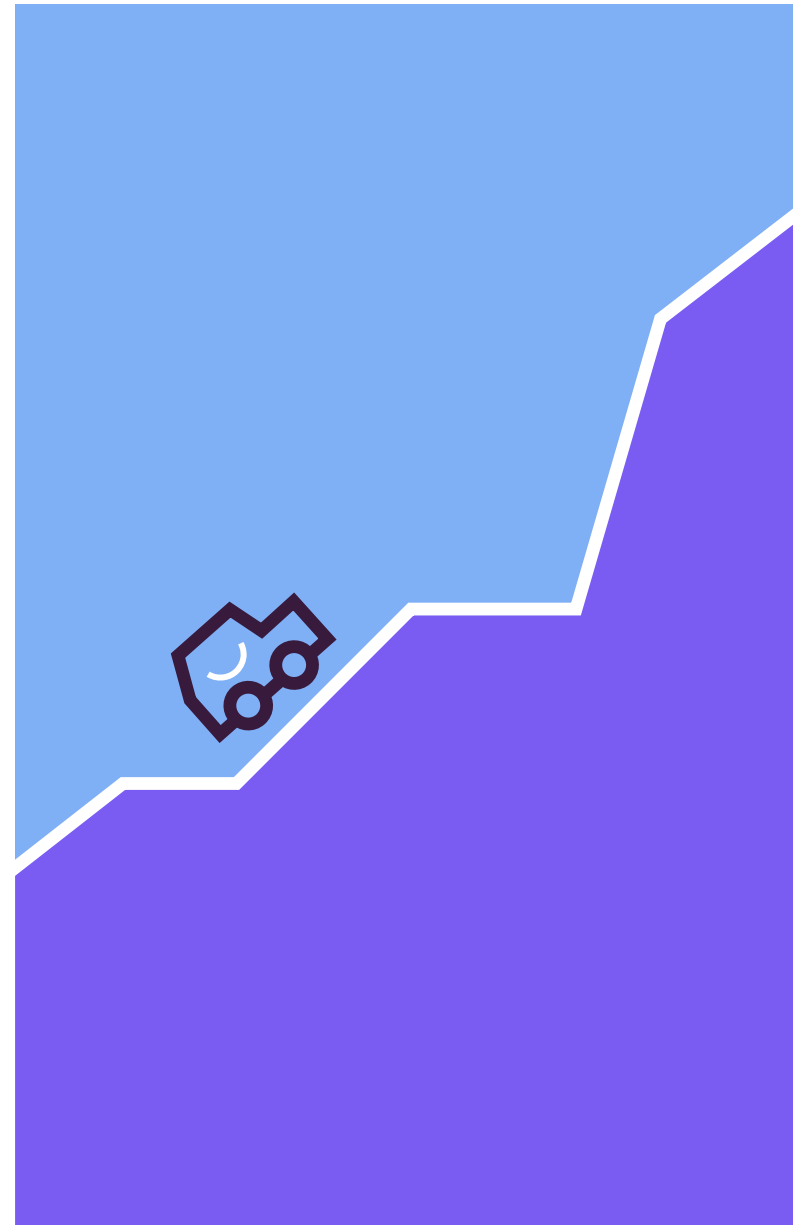
It's time for the generalists to keep up with the tools, and the burden of work to be eased by growing budgets and expanding technology possibilities. Let's equip the IT professionals of 2025 and beyond for success, and focus on giving them the relief they need so that they can do what they are meant to: secure the data, standardize the tool set, and support the productivity of the employees they serve day to day.



Introduction

In the years since Auvik began publishing a field report on IT networks, we've covered a lot of changing ground. 2025 is set to be one of the most fast-paced years to date in terms of how IT work is developing. This is not only due to the fact that the proliferation of AI means IT departments are being kept on their toes, but because a talent shortage has been brewing in the ecosystem, and it's about to reach its peak.

In this report we'll look at data about the workload hanging over IT professionals right now, the biggest challenges impeding their success, and where we can go from here. Hold on to your ethernet cables, it's going to be a bumpy ride! →



01

Section 1

IT professionals' workload

In the IT field, there has been a lot of discussion around supporting remote and hybrid workers. While there are increasing numbers of mandates for returning workers to the office, one thing will continue to remain consistent: IT professionals are expected to manage technology for their organizations no matter where or how far it extends. There will always be clients that an MSP has to manage with fewer truck rolls, and branch offices monitored by a single team from head office. Even fully on-site and in-office teams deal with network migration in the sense that leaders will travel from boardroom to boardroom, and employees may need to bring laptops home or work on their mobile devices after hours.

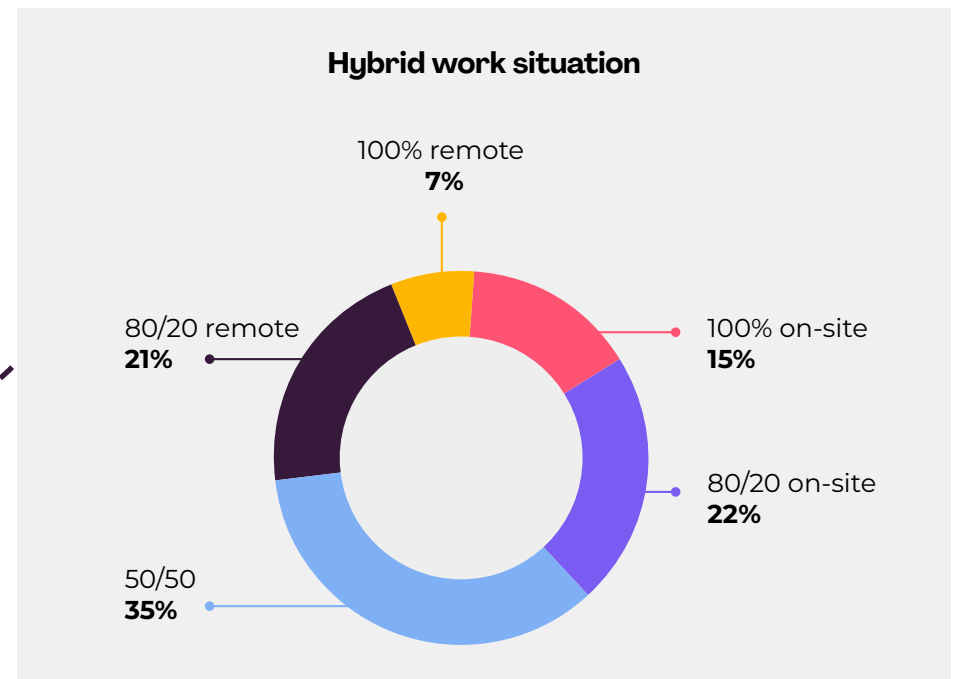
That said, there is still data confirming that remote work isn't dead. 63% of respondents reported supporting remote workers 50% or more of the time. The distribution of how often IT is responsible for remote work has changed significantly since previous years, but it has not decreased to the point of being superfluous.

63%

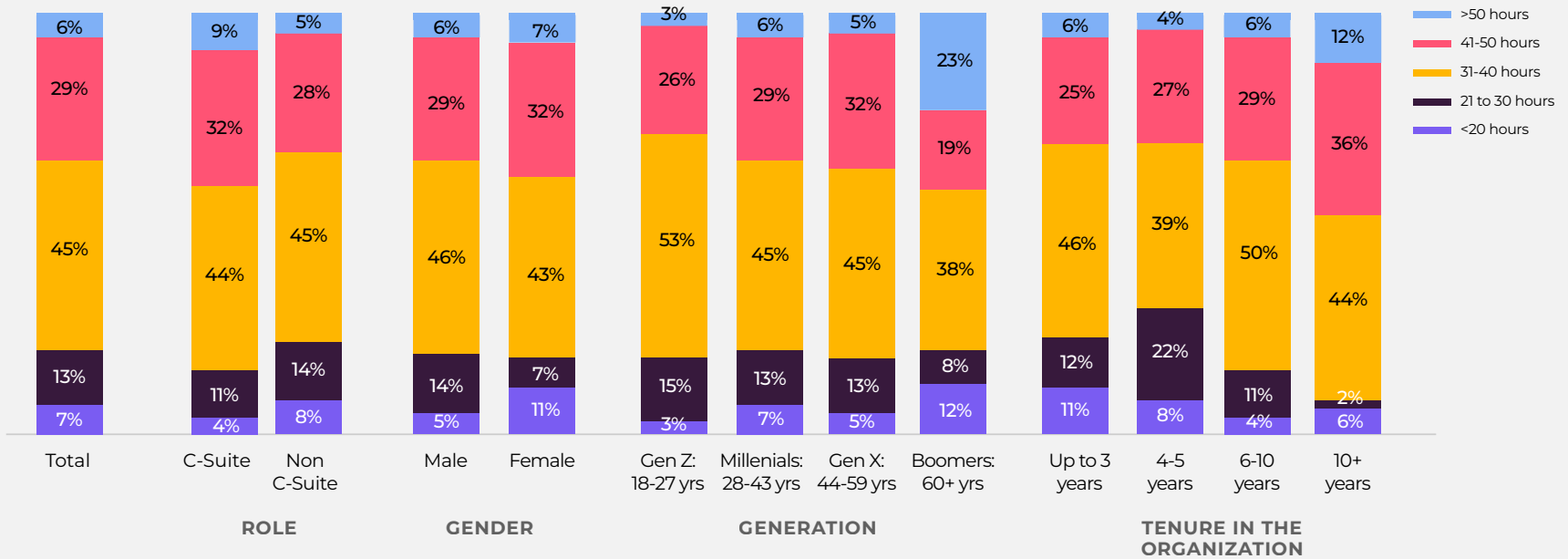
of respondents reported supporting remote workers 50% or more of the time

37%

responded differently than last year—their working situation has changed



Average IT professional's work week



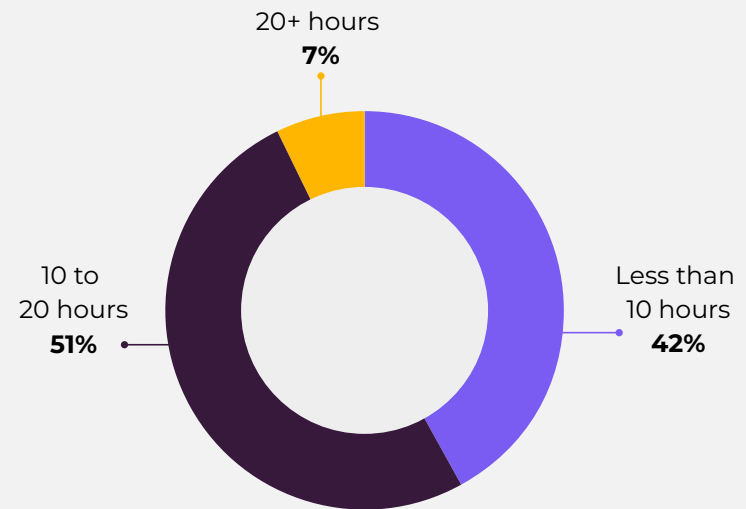
Further trends emerge when diving into the average hour length of IT professionals' work week. A startling data point is the workload being carried by those who identified as the longest tenured and most senior in their organization. Employees in the Boomer generation and those with 10 or more years experience in the field are much more likely to be working 50+ hours in a week, with the former carrying the heaviest burden—23% of respondents in the Boomer generation work more than 50 hours a week. Those with 10+ years in the field were at 12% of responses indicating the same.



When continuing along this vein to survey the average time spent resolving end-user requests, 58% of IT professionals shared that they spend half or more of their work week on tickets for the end-user. As we'll discuss later in this report, end-user support remains a high priority for IT teams, so it's no surprise to see the amount of time dedicated to solving their frustrations.

But this can present another challenge as well, if teams are not equipped to deal with constant troubleshooting as well as they could be. The state of the network is another key indicator of an IT department's health and efficiency.

Average hours spent resolving end-user requests

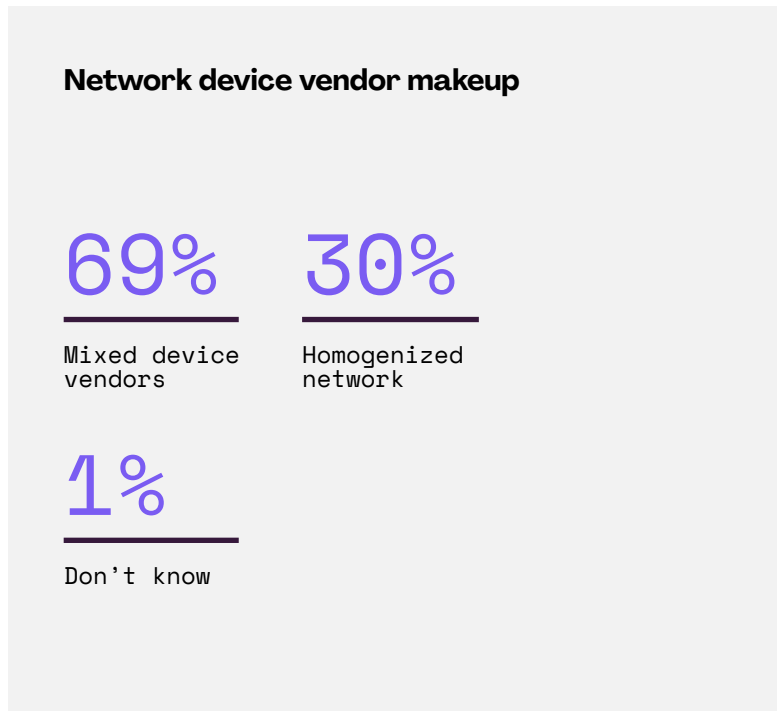




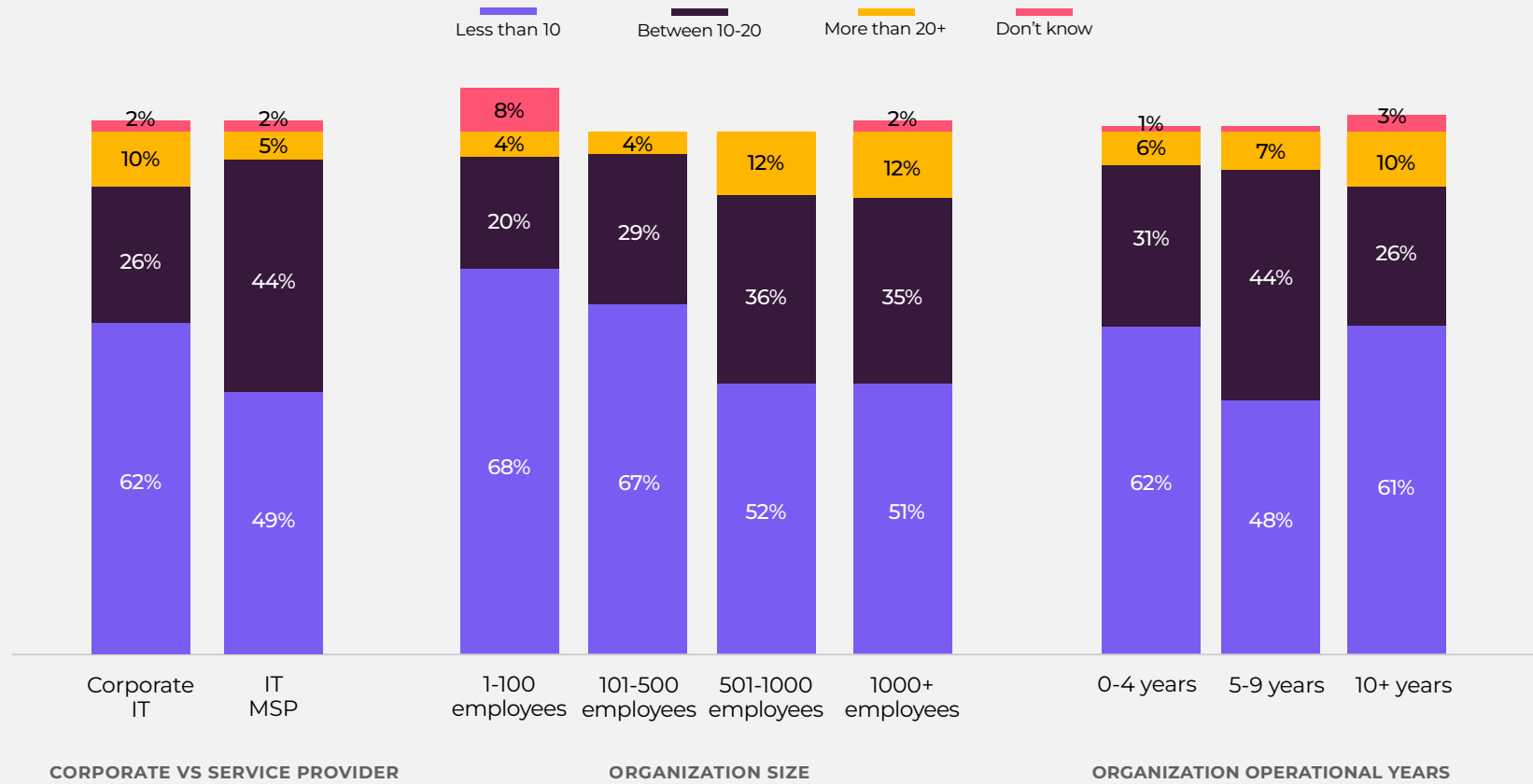
IT teams across the surveyed group were fairly confident their network makeup was heterogeneous, or a mixed-vendor environment, with nearly 70% of respondents reporting that state. Homogenized networks are a situation that not every IT department and certainly not every MSP can produce. But both homogenous and mixed-vendor environments come with their own difficulties. With vendor homogeneity an IT team is hyper-reliant on their preferred vendor's updates, while mixed-vendor infrastructure creates a different, well-documented problem: tool-sprawl.

MSPs, who likely experience managing the most mixed vendor environments, can be seen to experience the most tool sprawl, with nearly 50% of them reporting 10+ network tools in use. Roughly 25% of small and mid-sized corporate IT departments, as well as those with long-tenured organizations, reported the same number of tools.

Server monitoring is contributing to this issue, with 74% of survey respondents agreeing that the tools they need to monitor servers in their environments are contributing to tool-sprawl at their organizations.

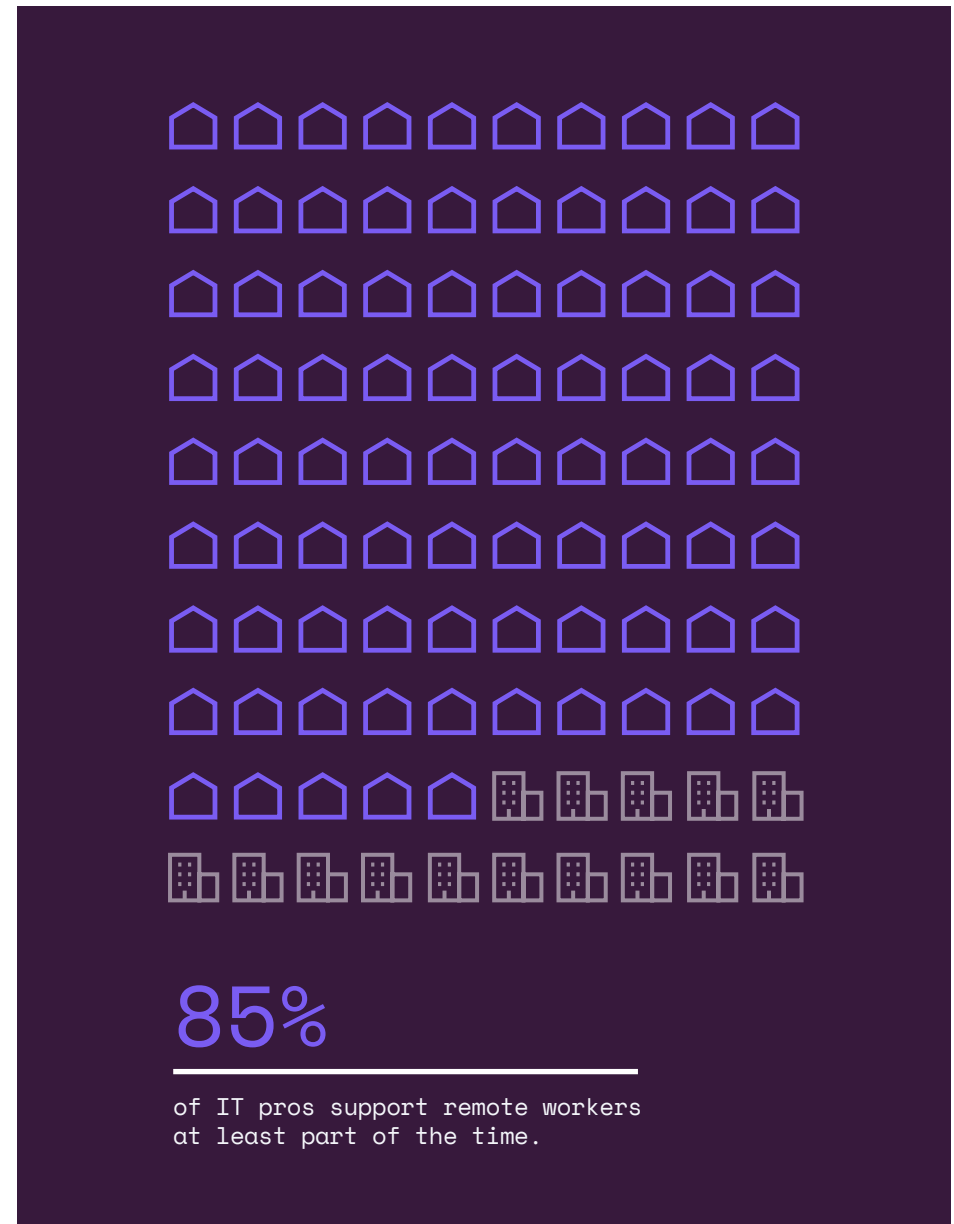


Number of network-related tools in use



Key takeaways

- 85% of IT pros support remote workers at least part of the time, with 63% supporting remote workers 50% of the time or more.
- The heaviest burden of work is falling to the most senior employees, with the Boomer generation and IT pros having more than 10 years of experience showing the longest work weeks in IT.
- Most IT pros (69%) work with heterogeneous or mixed vendor environments.
- Tool sprawl is a significant issue and MSPs are facing the most tool sprawl (50% of MSPs report using 10+ network tools).
- Using separate tools for server monitoring is common (74%) and contributes to the sprawl.



02



Section 2

Biggest blockers

Some of the blockers to IT productivity are already evident from the first section of this report, but in continuing to examine IT networks, along with management metrics and burnout factors, a more complete picture will become visible.

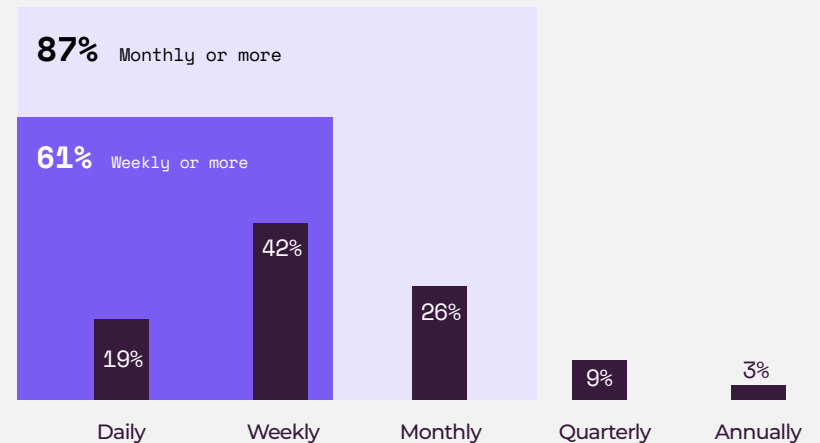
61% of IT professionals reported changing their network configurations on a weekly basis or more often

This can be part of the burden of work, but it is a necessary burden. Making changes to configurations can be done for a number of reasons, including making hardware more efficient, supporting the operations of the business, and ensuring security. However, a number of IT teams do not ever (1%), or only annually (2%), update their documentation on the network.

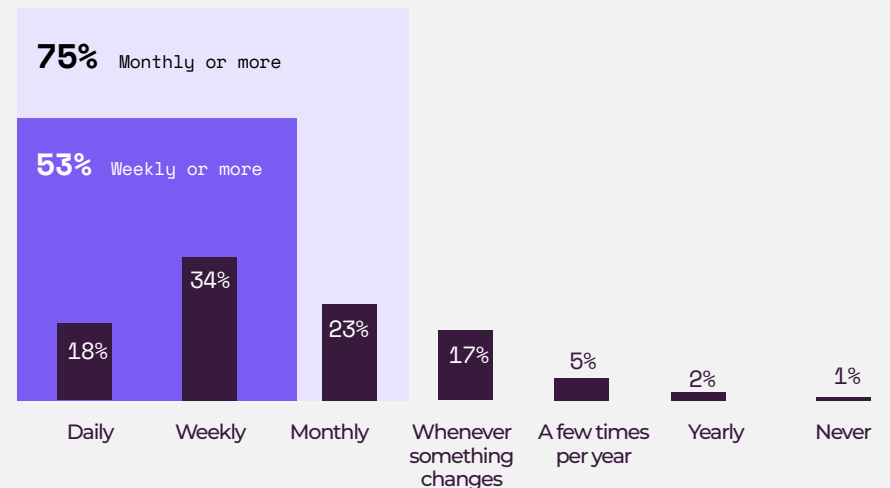
Considering the amount of tool sprawl present, along with the 17% of IT professionals who report updating documentation every time something changes, it isn't surprising to think that many IT teams may be supporting their constantly changing environments with automated documentation, which is a great best practice.

But for the remaining respondents, especially the 48% of IT teams who only update documentation monthly or less often, there is a lot they could be missing. If an IT professional makes configuration changes weekly but updates documentation only once a month, they have 4x the work to document that day, and there's a good chance some configuration changes will be missed.

Network configuration change frequency



Network documentation update frequency

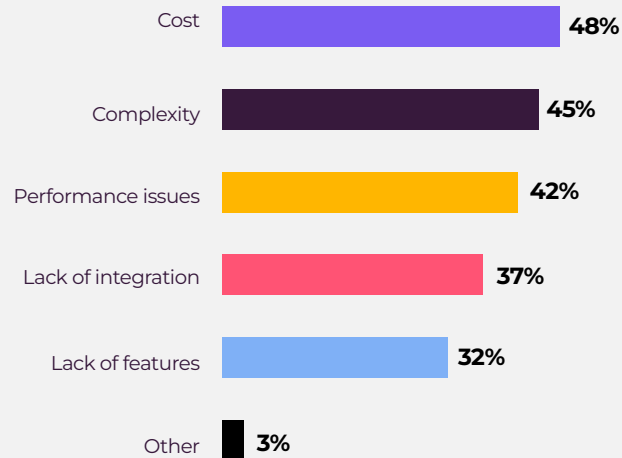




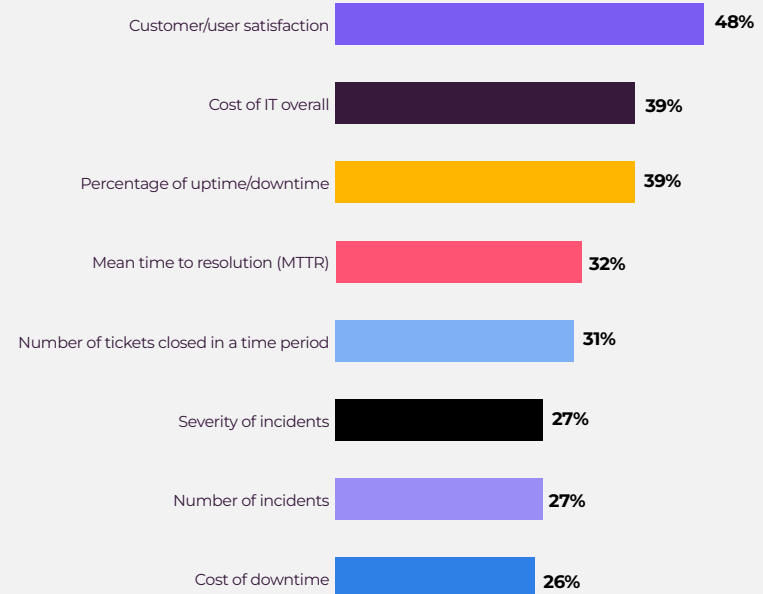
Tool sprawl is not the only problem IT professionals have with their tech stack, however. Cost (48% of respondents) and complexity (45%) were also reported as issues teams face with their network tools. 37% also mentioned a lack of integrations, or the fact that tools are disparate, as an issue, and it's easy to understand. Many tools claim to be all-in-one solutions but can't account for the quickly changing IT environment or factor in every other tool an IT team may need to do their jobs.

IT leaders have priorities for the work to be done, another factor in the complexity of an IT professional's daily workload. End-user satisfaction is, as predicted, the most important success metric for almost half of respondents (48%). The options following satisfaction were the cost (39%) and percentage of uptime (39%). IT professionals are juggling a lot! It's a good thing two of these metrics can impact each other: the higher an IT team's standards for network uptime, and the more effective they are at maintaining end-users' online connectivity, the happier and more productive the end-users will be.

Biggest pain points with current network tools



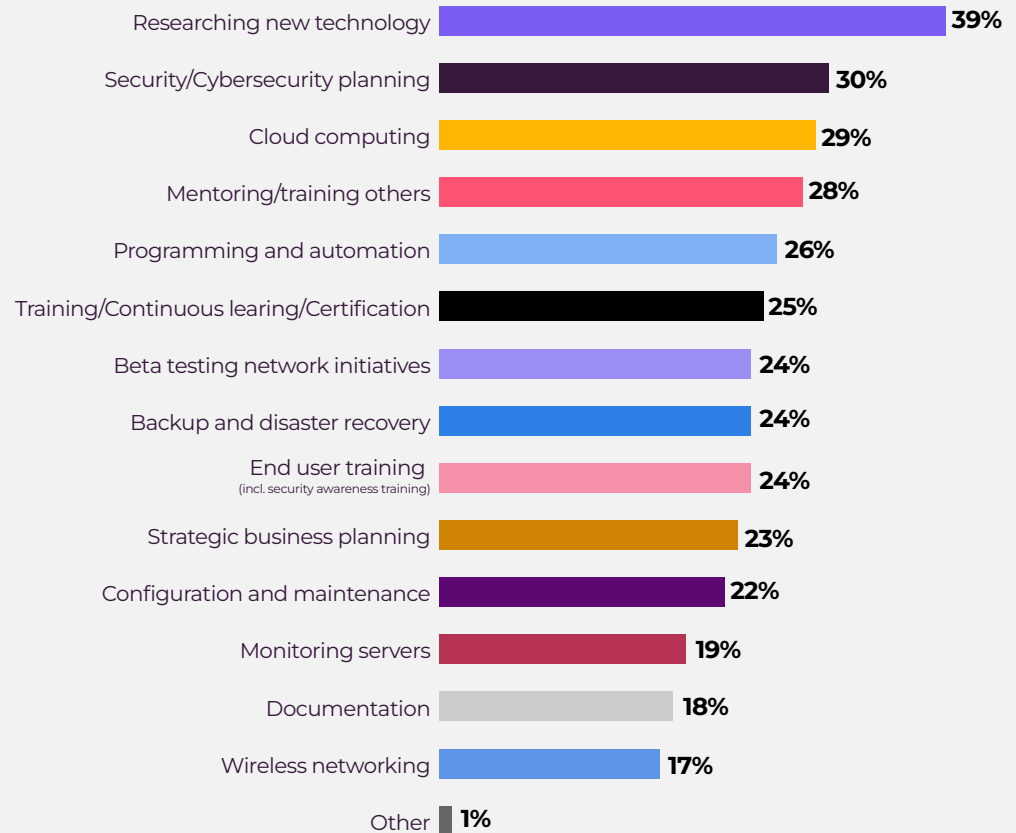
Most important success metrics for department





IT pros also have plenty of ideas on what they would wish for to help them achieve these success metrics. Understandably, as the list of jobs-to-be-done is never complete. Some of the items wishlisted by respondents this year include researching new technology (39%) and security planning (30%). It's likely that these items are on the list due to rising concerns and considerations around AI technology and its integration with the workforce. There are so many things IT teams want to do, and to move from “strategic business planning” to “programming and automation” is not an easy transition. Task switching is also work, and focus can be hard to come by when you're fighting fires all the time.

Wishlist network-related activities





Where do IT Pros need to focus?

IT teams are unfortunately in the position where they are being forced to choose: do they focus energy on quickly resolving end-user concerns, reacting to problems as they arise; or do they proactively make an effort to build and maintain systems that may have fewer issues? Recall that 10-20 hours of an IT professional's week are already dedicated to end-user ticket resolution—that leaves about half of the week to perform any other tasks. And there can be a lot of admin, onboarding, offboarding, training, and more for these workers to tackle. Something to consider for the IT managers who want to be informed on their workforce's sentiments is which elements of work are the biggest blockers to the wishlist.

Not enough time (32%) and not enough team members in IT (28%) were the main impediments to these wishlist items, respondents reported. Time is likely a factor of the significance and frequency of end-user requests. But the shortage of talent is what may be contributing to small IT teams feeling overburdened by their to-do lists. From the included charts it is also apparent that the wishlist item IT professionals sacrifice most often when they run out of time is researching new technology. This may be a risk for some organizations that are early adapters of new tools.

Reasons for not implementing wishlist items	Top five activities not implemented				
	Researching new technology	Security/cybersecurity	Cloud computing	Mentoring/training others	Programming & automation
Not enough time 32%	44%	36%	21%	36%	32%
Not enough IT team members 28%	26%	23%	24%	35%	30%
Not enough money 21%	24%	26%	24%	13%	24%
I don't have the support from management 18%	10%	19%	23%	16%	17%
I don't have the resources or personnel 15%	11%	11%	17%	13%	17%
I don't have the required expertise 7%	3%	12%	10%	5%	8%
Other 4%	5%	5%	3%	6%	2%



It's also worth considering whether IT teams are able to be productive if the burden of work is so large that they can't keep up with some of the demands of the job. IT professionals are trusted to stay knowledgeable about their field. If the burden of work is outweighing the ability to be productive, as 44% of respondents reported, things are getting dire!

Lack of visibility into network issues (44%) is something that is also not uncommon, but can easily be solved by implementing real-time monitoring and visibility tools. The shortage of IT talent is a real threat to both organizational security and technological advancement.

Factors impeding productivity in IT

44%

Burden of work outweighing ability to be proactive

44%

Lack of visibility in real-time to network connectivity or other issues

41%

Morale due to other factors
(e.g., talent shortage, lack of appreciation, career dissatisfaction, etc.)

39%

Difficult or severe incidents to resolve outweighing smaller requests


2%

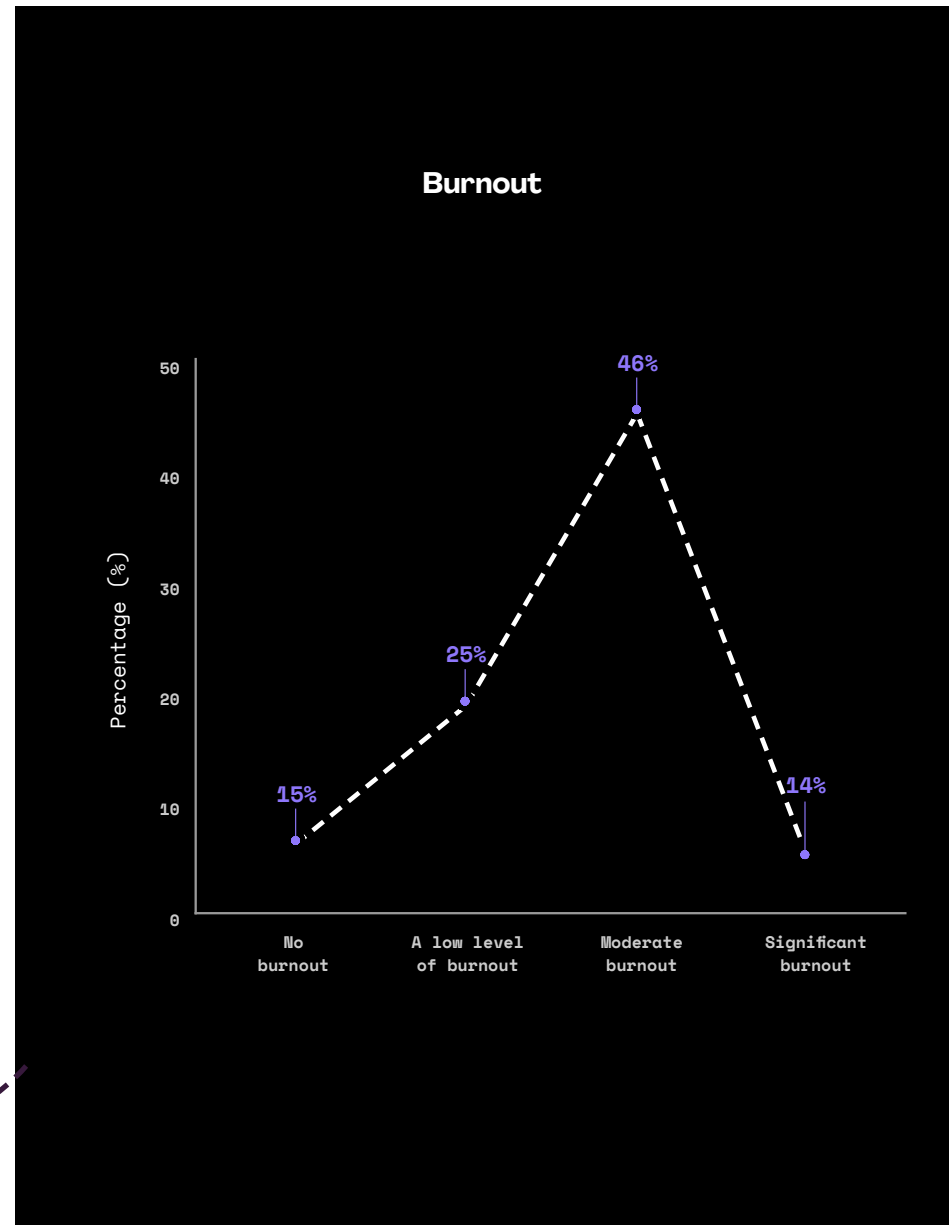
Other



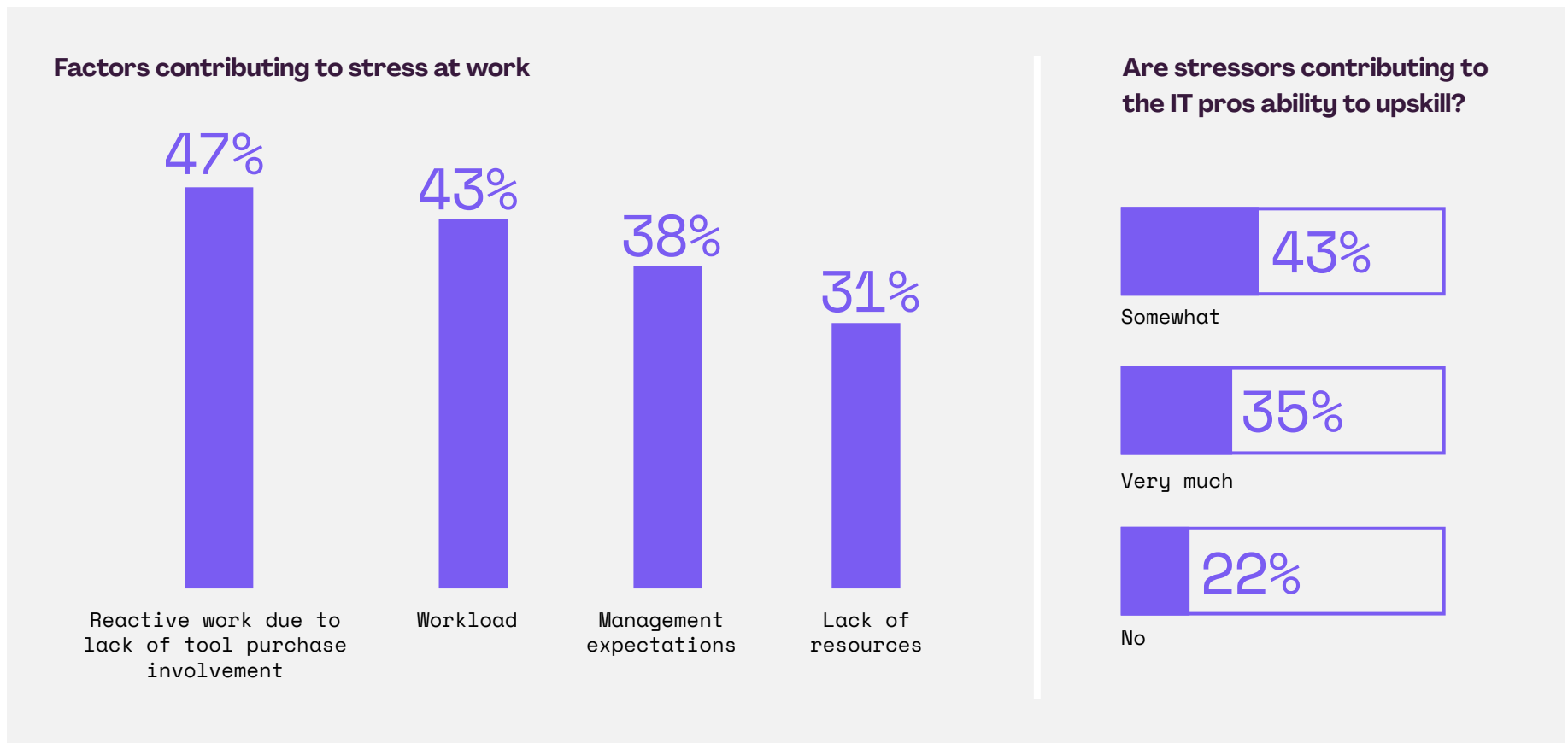
And when considering the threat that a lack of IT professionals presents, it is worth being conscious of how the professionals already in the field feel at work. Burnout threatens to reduce team size even further if technicians are overburdened to the point of breaking. A recent Harris Poll survey suggests that the average IT professional experiences burnout 15-23% more often than other industries. And as the charts here convey, 60% of respondents are already feeling at least moderately burned out on the job. If that's you, IT professional reading this report, now's the time to take a breather, grab a 15 minute coffee break, and tell your boss "Auvik said I need the time to think about this data."

What's contributing to their burn out, in their own words? 43% say it's the workload of course, but 47% also noted that they are frustrated by not being consulted earlier in procurement processes for new tools, indicating the lift they face when they have to learn to troubleshoot technology they didn't fully investigate or approve.

60% 
Are feeling at least moderately burned out



The stressors discussed here are all contributing to the ability of IT professionals to advance in their careers as well. A disappointing 78% of respondents said that their work stressors are preventing them from upskilling. Again, this can impede on an organization’s ability to advance in technology. If IT isn’t leading the charge on incorporating new tools, who is? And are those decision makers up to the challenge of managing, mastering, and securing what they procure?



Key takeaways

- IT professionals are increasingly overburdened, unable to focus on vital parts of their work, and tasked with integrating tools into their workflows that they may not have been properly consulted on.
- 44% said the burden of work is outweighing the ability to be productive. 47% noted that they are frustrated by not being consulted earlier in procurement processes for new tools.
- 60% of respondents to this report survey expressed feeling burnt out by their work.
- 78% said that stressors at work are preventing them from upskilling. These stressors, such as the broader IT talent shortage and the heft of end-user requests, are also inhibiting IT professionals from tackling key items on their wishlists.

60%

of respondents to this report survey expressed feeling burnt out by their work



03

Section 3

The way forward

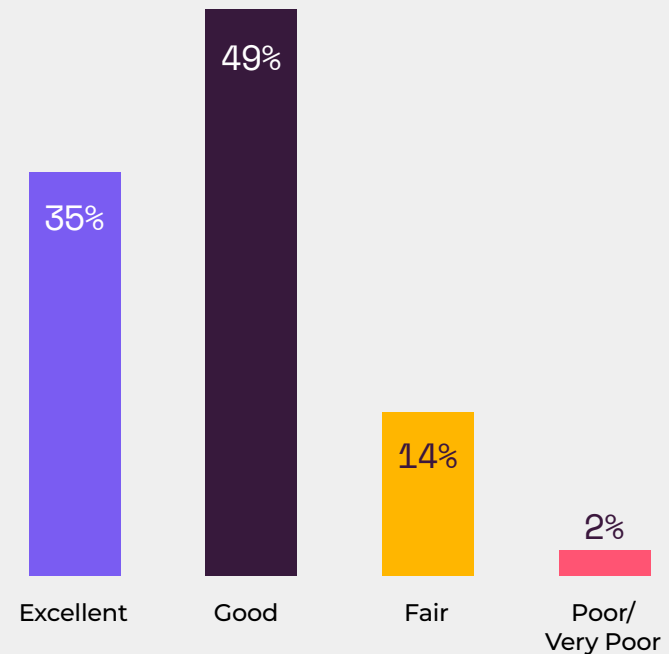
So where is the future taking us? Given that there are advancements being made daily towards work automation and AI support tools, those could become strong solution contenders. But the technology isn't quite ready to replace an IT department, and it's fair to say that for a while yet, there will be humans needed to oversee the tool stack used by the rest of the workforce. So how can talent be retained and satisfied?

Retention starts with job satisfaction. IT professionals reported strong satisfaction with their managers, with 84% of respondents noting "Good" or "Excellent" support for IT initiatives from management.

84% 

Agree that leadership is good or excellent at supporting IT initiatives

What is IT pros' level of satisfaction with management?





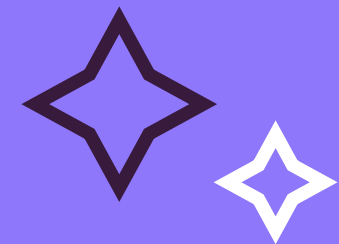
Where can management focus their attention?

On the flip side, when we asked respondents to name where they feel their management could pay more attention, there was more evidence presented by the risk of integrating new tools for teams without consulting IT or considering policy. AI was at the top of the list of concerns, and 24% of technicians with 10+ years of tenure noted the risks associated with using AI or automation. Right on the heels of this data is the concern for lack of cybersecurity training, which is very likely associated with the way company data can be leaked due to unauthorized use of tools.

There are SaaS management tools on the market today that can help manage some of the threats of shadow IT, including shadow AI use. Equally important to implementing a solution is ensuring that end users get regular IT training about acceptable use of software and new software introduction policies, and that IT teams themselves have time to do the research needed to make the most of the solution.

24%

of technicians with 10+ years of tenure noted the risks associated with using AI or automation

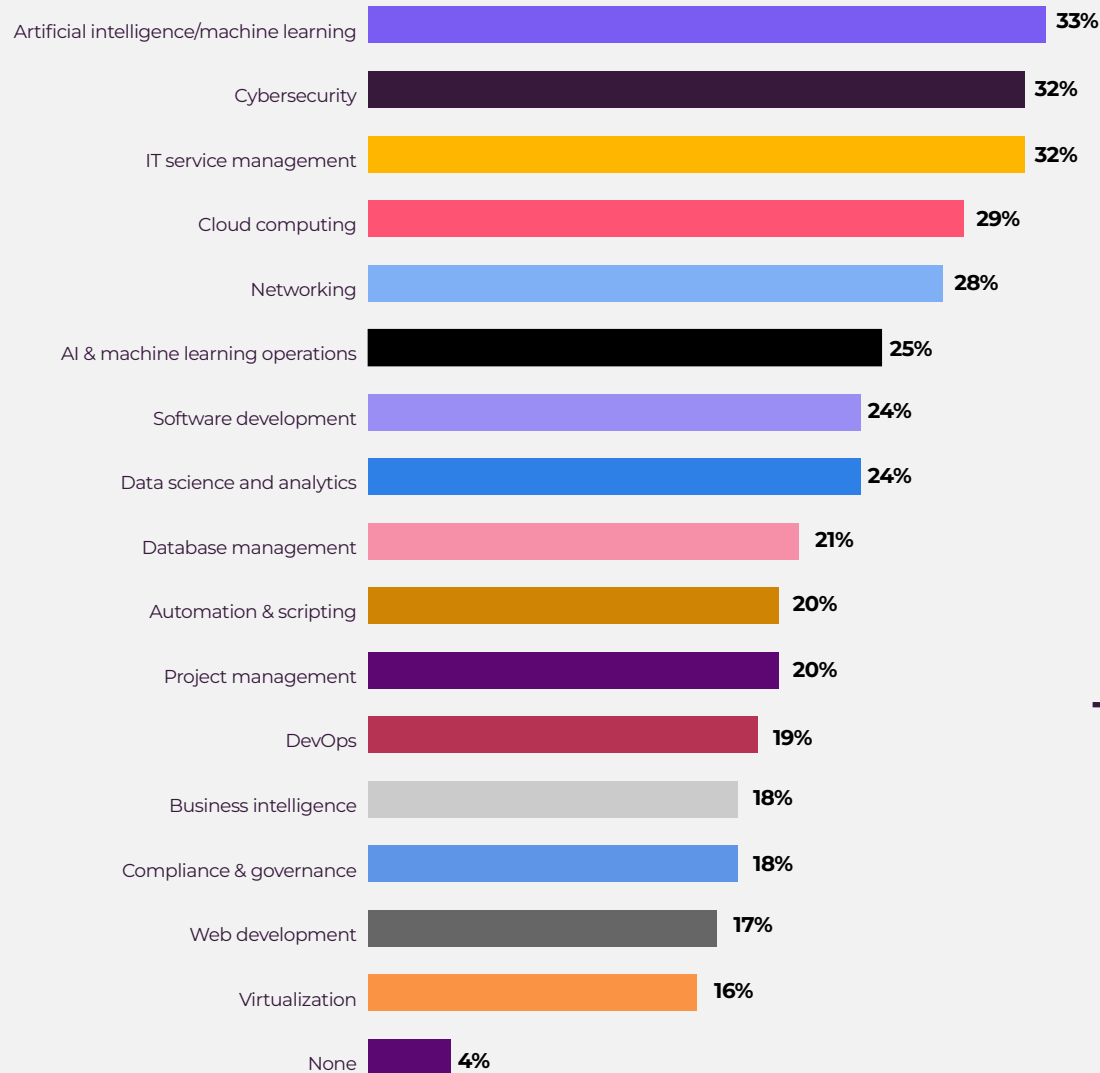




What isn't management paying attention to?

	TOTAL	Role		Tenure in organization			
		C-Suite	Non C-Suite	Up to 3 years	4-5 years	6-10 years	More than 10 years
Using AI/automation without understanding risks	21%	20%	21%	19%	22%	18%	24%
Lack of cybersecurity training	18%	14%	21%	15%	21%	19%	13%
Data privacy regulations	13%	14%	12%	13%	16%	12%	9%
Shadow IT	12%	11%	13%	4%	16%	12%	12%
Cloud cost management	10%	11%	9%	7%	11%	11%	7%
Insider threats	9%	11%	7%	7%	7%	10%	9%
End-of-life systems	8%	9%	7%	13%	6%	8%	8%
Disaster recovery & backup	8%	8%	8%	15%	3%	7%	13%
Other	2%	1%	3%	4%	—	2%	4%

Skills and certifications IT pros are pursuing next year



IT professionals are expected to pursue training to improve their knowledge and breadth of expertise, but we know that they are increasingly unable to do so because of the burden at work. So which training and certifications are the top priorities?









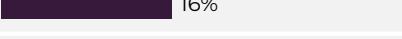
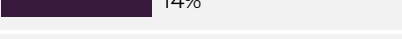
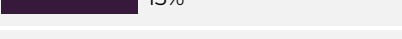
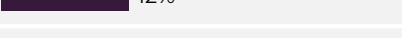
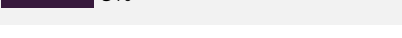
As expected, AI tops the list with 33% of professionals looking to train that skill, followed by cybersecurity training at 32%. Maybe a bit more surprising to some, IT teams have understood the assignment on the importance of end-user experience and are also investing the little time they have into IT service management training (32%). This aligns with the trends seen in how success is defined for most of the respondents—by user satisfaction—as a mature IT Service Management framework is well aligned with overall end user satisfaction.

3.8

The average IT pro identifies nearly four skills and certifications they would like to pursue in the new year



Investment considerations for the next twelve months

		Role		Tenure in organization			
		C-Suite	Non C-Suite	Up to 3 years	4-5 years	6-10 years	More than 10 years
Cloud monitoring & management	 38%	47%	33%	22%	43%	39%	41%
SaaS monitoring & management	 35%	39%	32%	27%	30%	42%	33%
ITSM (IT service management)	 34%	42%	29%	25%	29%	38%	39%
Wi-Fi management	 28%	33%	25%	13%	30%	30%	29%
Network automation	 28%	29%	27%	15%	32%	27%	33%
Server monitoring	 25%	26%	24%	16%	33%	23%	22%
Network hardware	 24%	22%	26%	21%	24%	27%	22%
NPM (Network Performance Monitoring)	 20%	25%	18%	16%	19%	22%	23%
UEM (Unified Endpoint Management)	 16%	17%	15%	7%	18%	18%	16%
IPv6	 14%	19%	11%	12%	14%	16%	12%
SD-WAN	 13%	15%	12%	9%	13%	13%	16%
DNS/DHCP/IPAM(DDI)	 12%	18%	8%	7%	12%	14%	12%
No planned investments	 9%	3%	0%	24%	4%	4%	16%



Where should budget be allocated?

Time and budget are also being spent on existing IT investments. Cloud monitoring (38%) and SaaS monitoring (35%) were the top two reported areas of time and monetary spend for the next year. IT budgets appear to be relatively healthy too, with almost 70% of respondents expecting growth in their IT budgets since last year.

Not only are IT budgets increasing, but they're increasing beyond the rate of inflation. With 51% of respondents reporting a >10% budget increase year over year, it is clear organizations are making further investments in their IT operations solution stack, going beyond simple annual contract increases. Where are IT teams and MSPs investing their time and budget?

How much has IT's budget changed in the last year?

28%

Increased by 10-20%

23%

Increased by 20% or more

18%

Increased by 10% or less

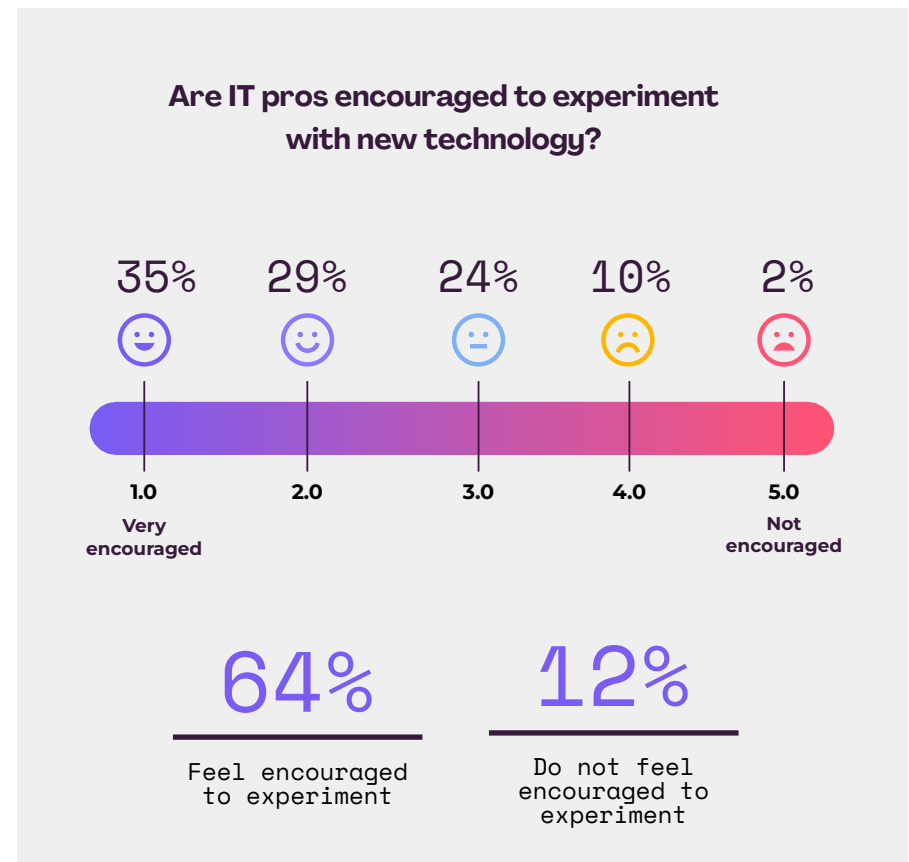
6%

No change

If budget and tool availability are not the issues, then it is safe to say that it's time for IT management to start encouraging their teams to experiment and find new ways to solve common issues. 64% of survey respondents already indicated that management is supportive of experimentation in the IT field.

But there is another side to the issue, which is that nearly 36% are not confident that they would be allowed to experiment with new technology.

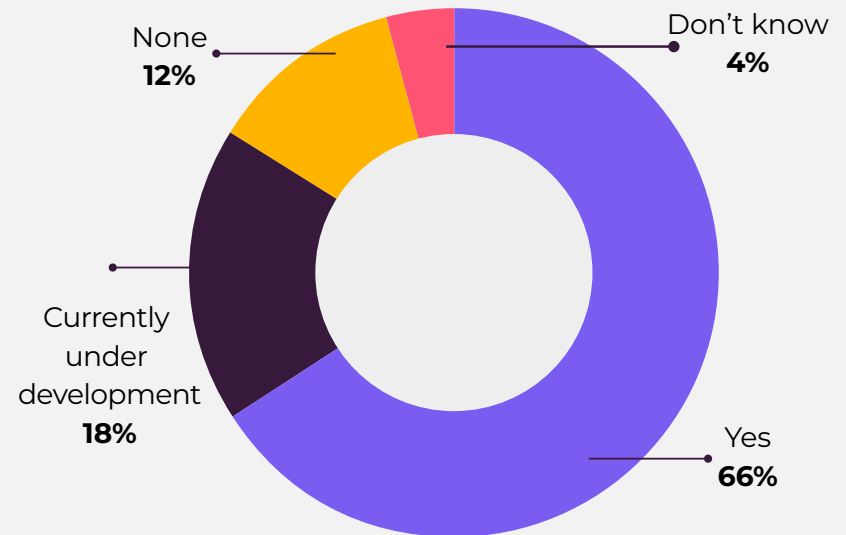
Understanding that the lag in documentation from the first part of this report is likely coming into play here, encouraging new solutions becomes highly necessary. Until IT teams can be fully staffed, which is still a common struggle, there needs to be time and energy dedicated to fully understanding the environment that the organization is working in, and that starts with IT. Policies and tools must be adopted to cover SaaS, network visibility, and of course, the elephant in the room: AI.





34% of respondents indicated that their organization still doesn't have a solid policy in place for the use of AI. 18% of those respondents did mention a plan is in development, but 16% have said they have no policy at all or simply don't know their stance. This is a huge red flag considering the pace of AI development and the need for data security. If IT teams already can't keep up with the pace of technology, as the senior generation of workers prepares to retire during a talent shortage there will be a dire situation in IT across the board.

Does IT have a policy in place for the use/adoption of AI?

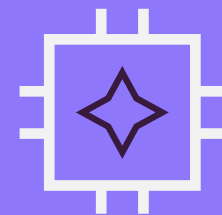


Key takeaways

- IT professionals are highly satisfied with their management (84%), except when it comes to their understanding of AI and security risks (20-24% report not being satisfied with the incorporation of AI policy currently).
- Time and budget are being spent to reduce the risks evident in this gap. 70% of respondents expect growth in their IT budgets since last year.
- 34% of respondents don't yet have a policy in place to tackle AI concerns.

1 / 3

of respondents named AI or machine learning as the area where they'd most like to upskill



Conclusion

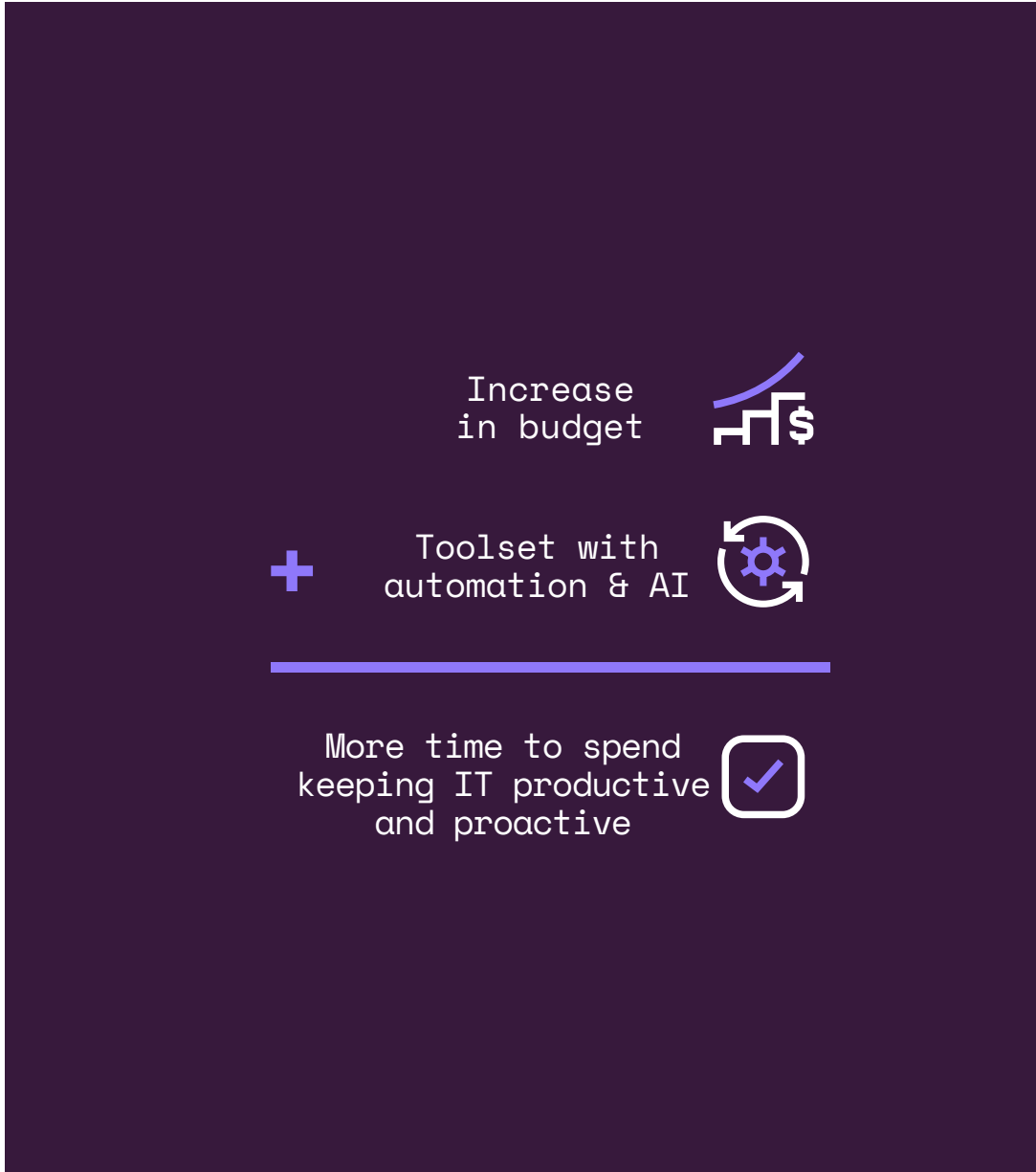
There are high stakes in the IT industry today, with talent shortages continuing and many teams already overburdened by the amount of support they perform day-to-day. On top of this, tool stacks are sprawling, and many in the industry are admitting that their organizations are yet unprepared to deal with the risks associated with new developments in technology such as automation and AI.

Help IT professionals carry the burden

It is significantly important for work to be done to better equip IT professionals to support advancements in technology, as the pace of development is only going to increase to a break-neck speed from here. Before the senior technicians who are carrying much of the burden of end-user and tech-stack support retire, solutions need to be found to help the next generation upskill and keep their hands on all things security.

Use budget increases to stabilize

Budgets appear to be healthy, so provided that thought and care is given to stabilizing the tools already in use by IT, as well as more time allotted for researching new technology, there is still hope. We have come so far in the field of IT, now is the time to take stock of what we've gained and prepare for the next leaps and bounds.



Appendix

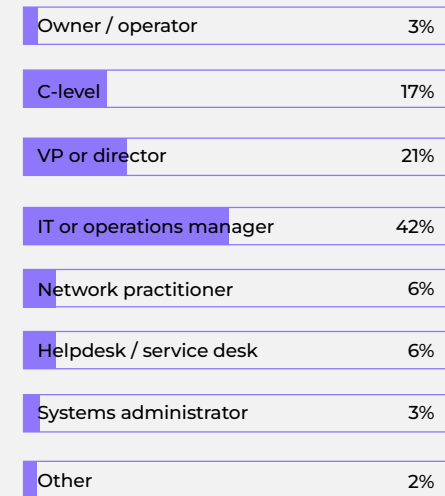


Appendix: survey statistics | Demographics

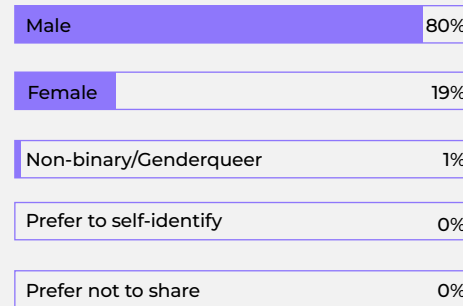
ROLE IN ORGANIZATION



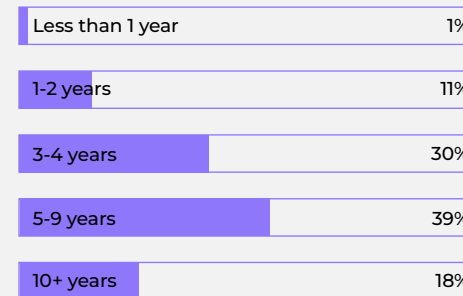
CURRENT JOB TITLE



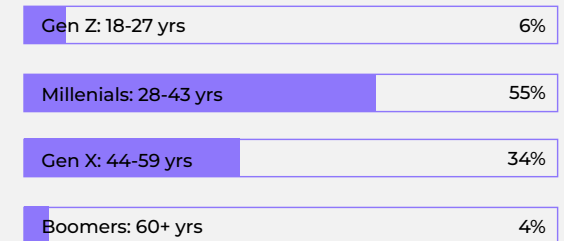
GENDER



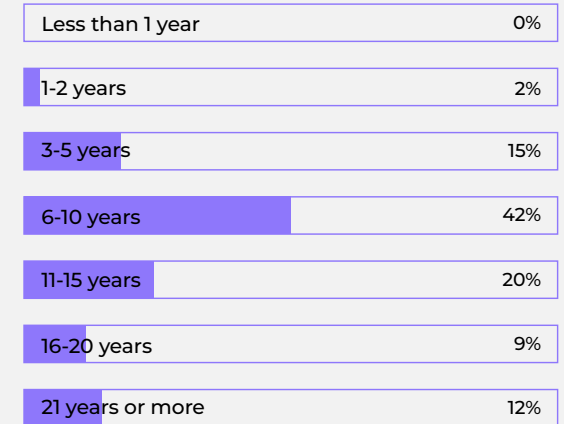
TENURE IN THE ORGANIZATION



GENERATION

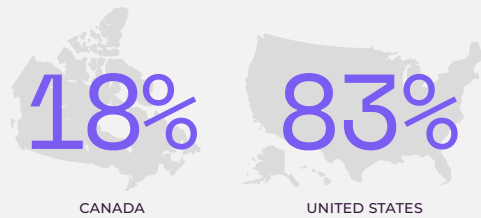


WORK EXPERIENCE IN IT

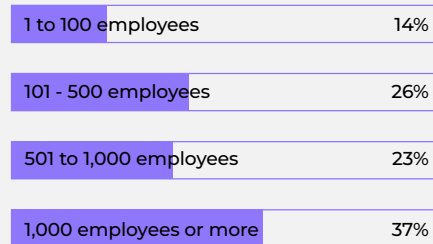


Appendix: survey statistics | Firmographics

COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE



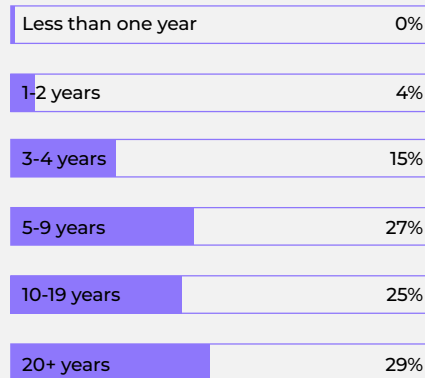
ORGANIZATION SIZE



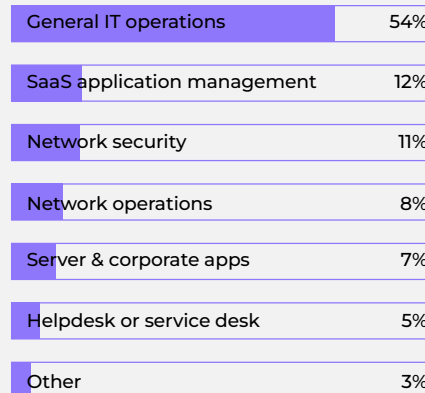
40% < 500 employees

60% 501+ employees

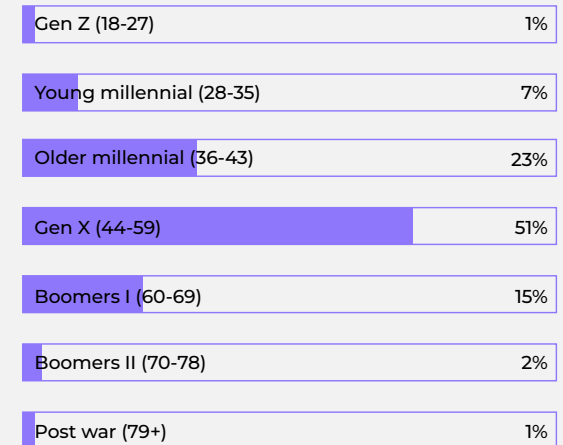
ORGANIZATION OPERATIONAL TENURE



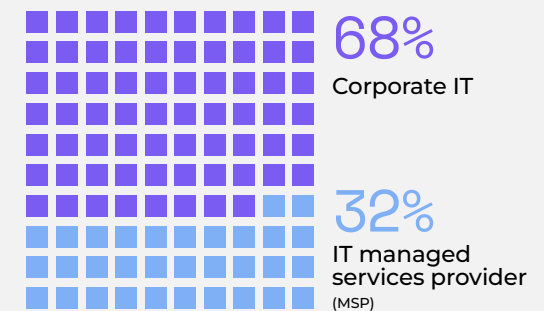
IT DEPARTMENT



AGE OF OWNER / LEADER



INDUSTRY



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