

NETWORK FIELD REPORT 2015

How companies are managing their IT networks today



Summary

Network Field Report 2015 highlights key findings on how in-house IT administrators at companies of varying sizes are managing their networks, how effective they believe their strategies are, which tasks occupy the majority of their time, and what they wish they could do differently.

Nearly a third of respondents lacked high confidence in their network's ability to meet the needs of their business.

Network configuration changes frequently, yet a quarter of all respondents never or rarely back up their configurations and a third never or rarely update their documentation, leaving them vulnerable in the event of an outage or disaster. Not surprisingly, network confidence is lowest in companies that don't back up configurations or keep documentation up to date.

Less than half of companies know exactly how their network is configured.

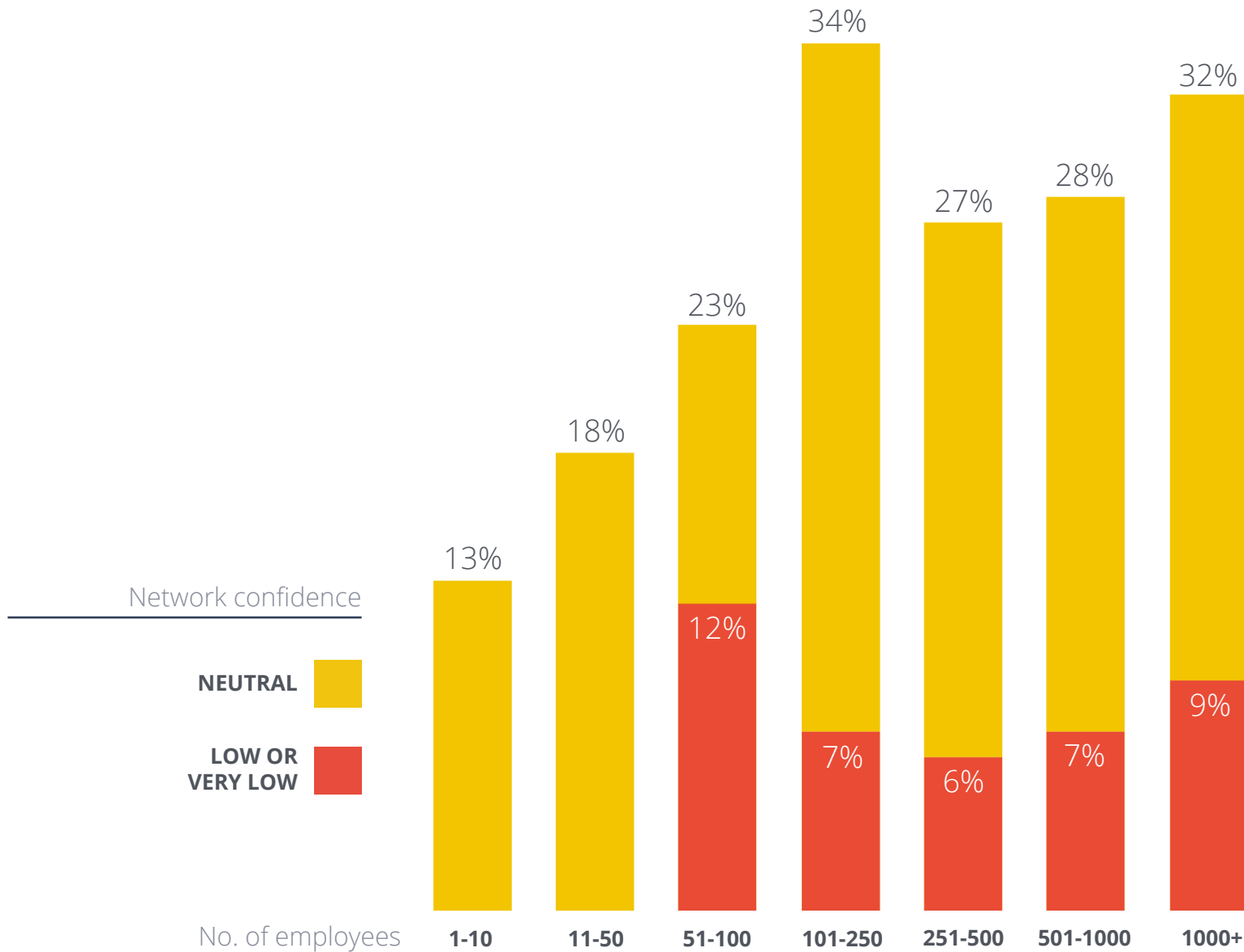
Almost half of all respondents said they do no network planning. Instead, most time is spent monitoring and troubleshooting networks.

Nearly a third of all IT pros are unsure about their network's ability to meet the needs of their business.

That's a third of companies that are potentially at risk.

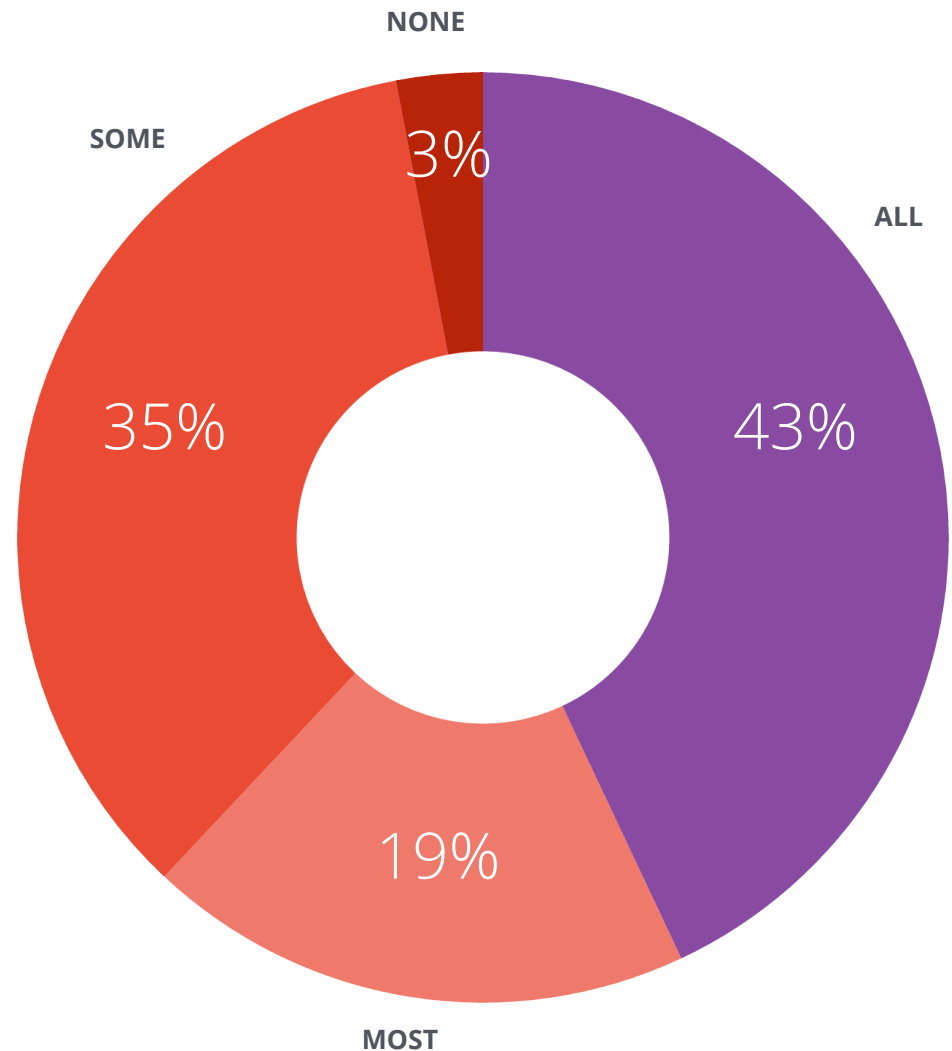


Network confidence is markedly lower in companies with more than 50 employees.



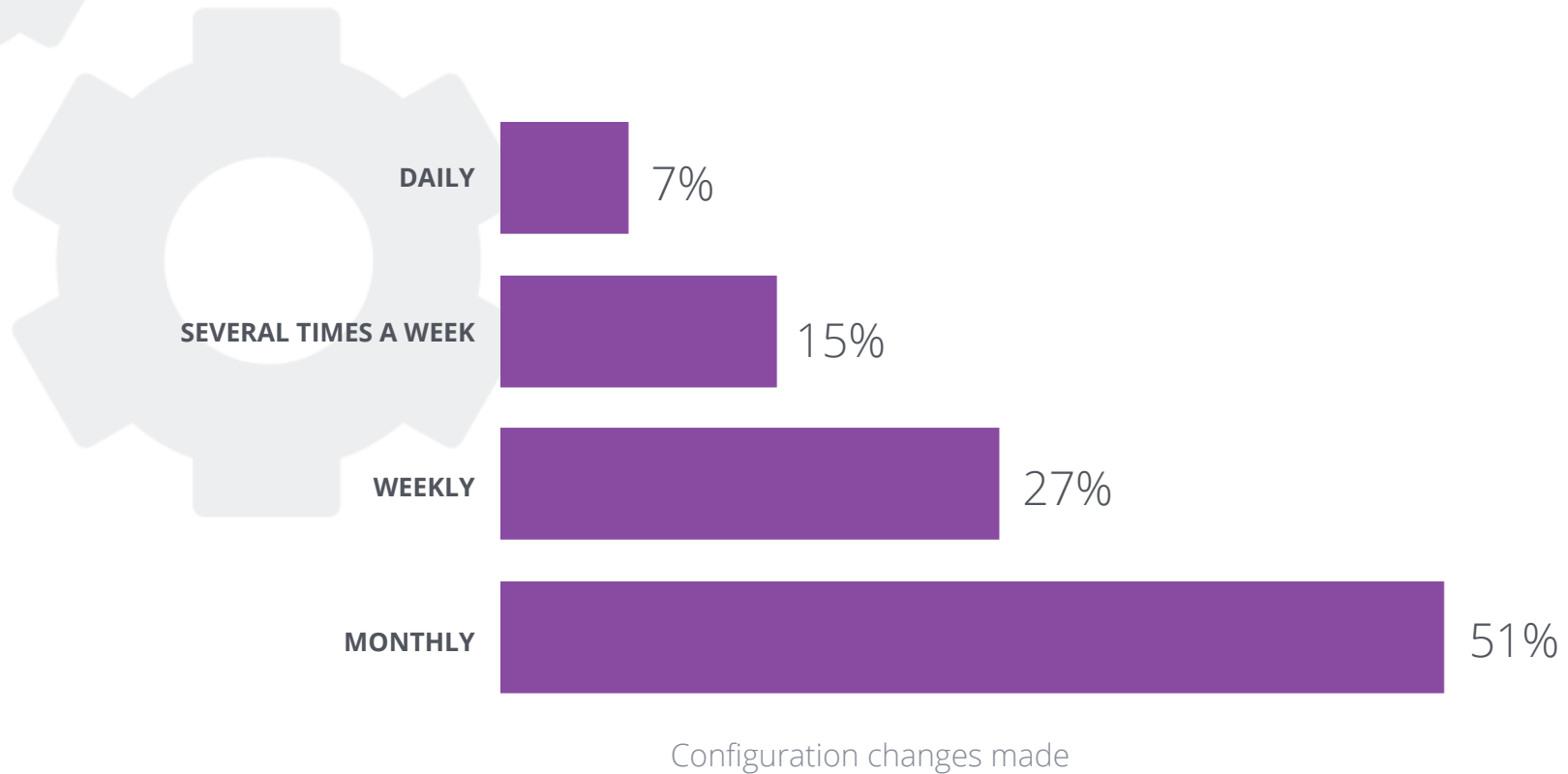
57% of IT pros have incomplete knowledge about how their network is configured.

That means more than half of admins are missing information they need to effectively troubleshoot and maintain their network.

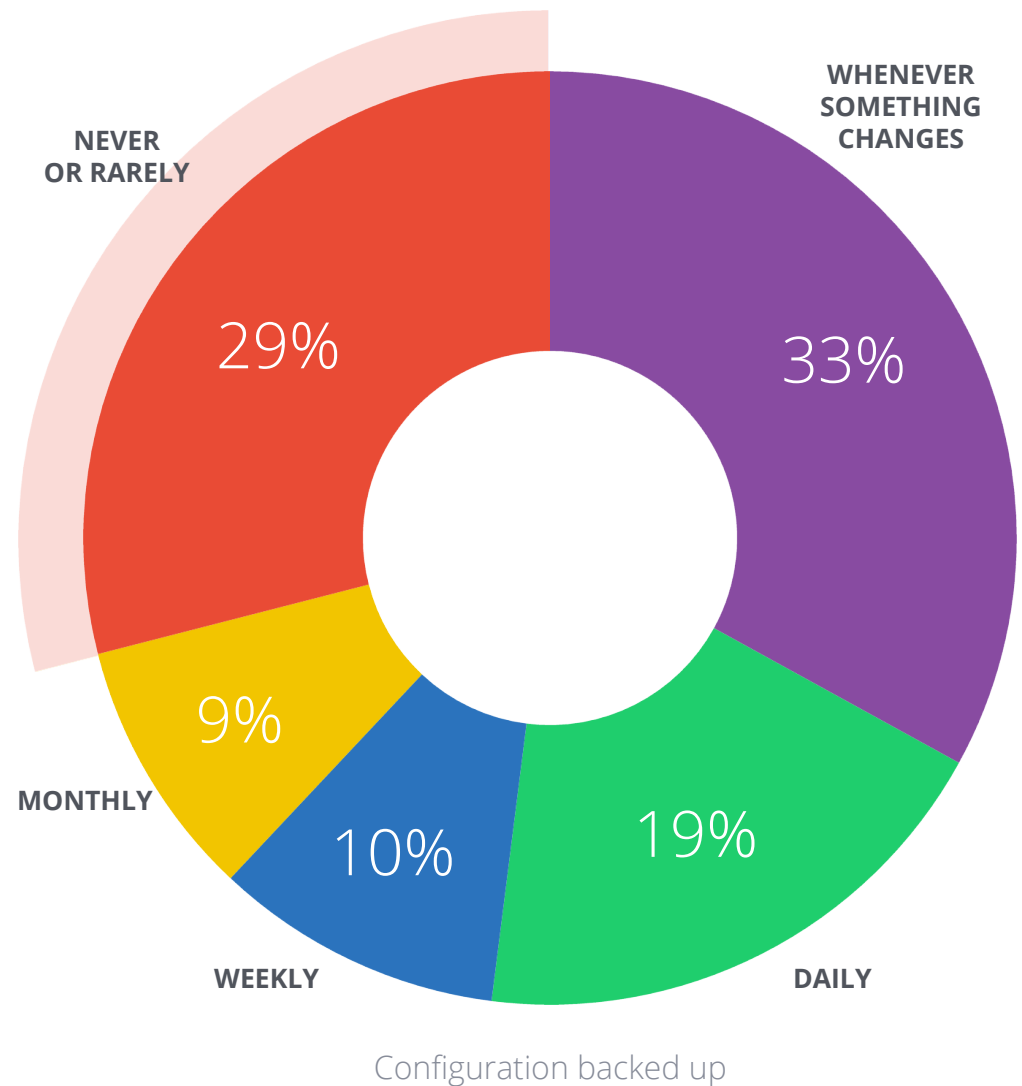


Knowledge of their network's configuration

Network configuration tends to change frequently.



Despite frequent configuration changes, more than a quarter of IT pros never or rarely back up their network configuration.

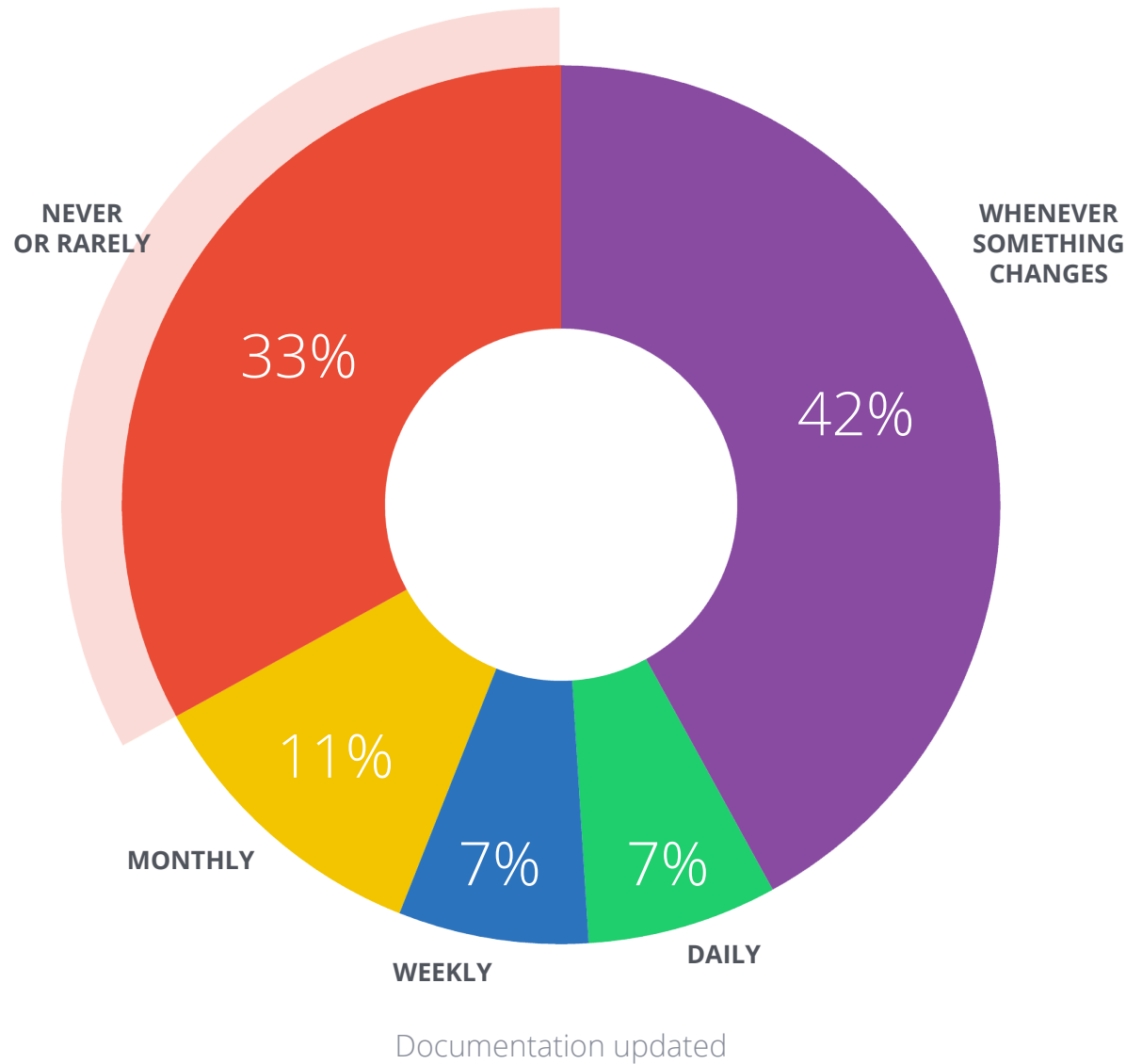


Not surprisingly, IT pros who don't back up their network configuration have low confidence in their networks. They are vulnerable should an outage or disruption occur.

Network confidence

| Configuration backup frequency | VERY LOW | LOW | NEUTRAL | HIGH | VERY HIGH |
|-----------------------------------|----------|-----|---------|------|-----------|
| NEVER OR RARELY | 75% | 60% | 29% | 28% | 10% |
| MONTHLY | 36% | 0% | 10% | 10% | 6% |
| WEEKLY | 0% | 10% | 10% | 10% | 10% |
| DAILY | 0% | 10% | 11% | 18% | 29% |
| WHENEVER SOMETHING CHANGES | 0% | 10% | 36% | 32% | 43% |

What's more, a third of IT pros never or rarely update their network documentation.

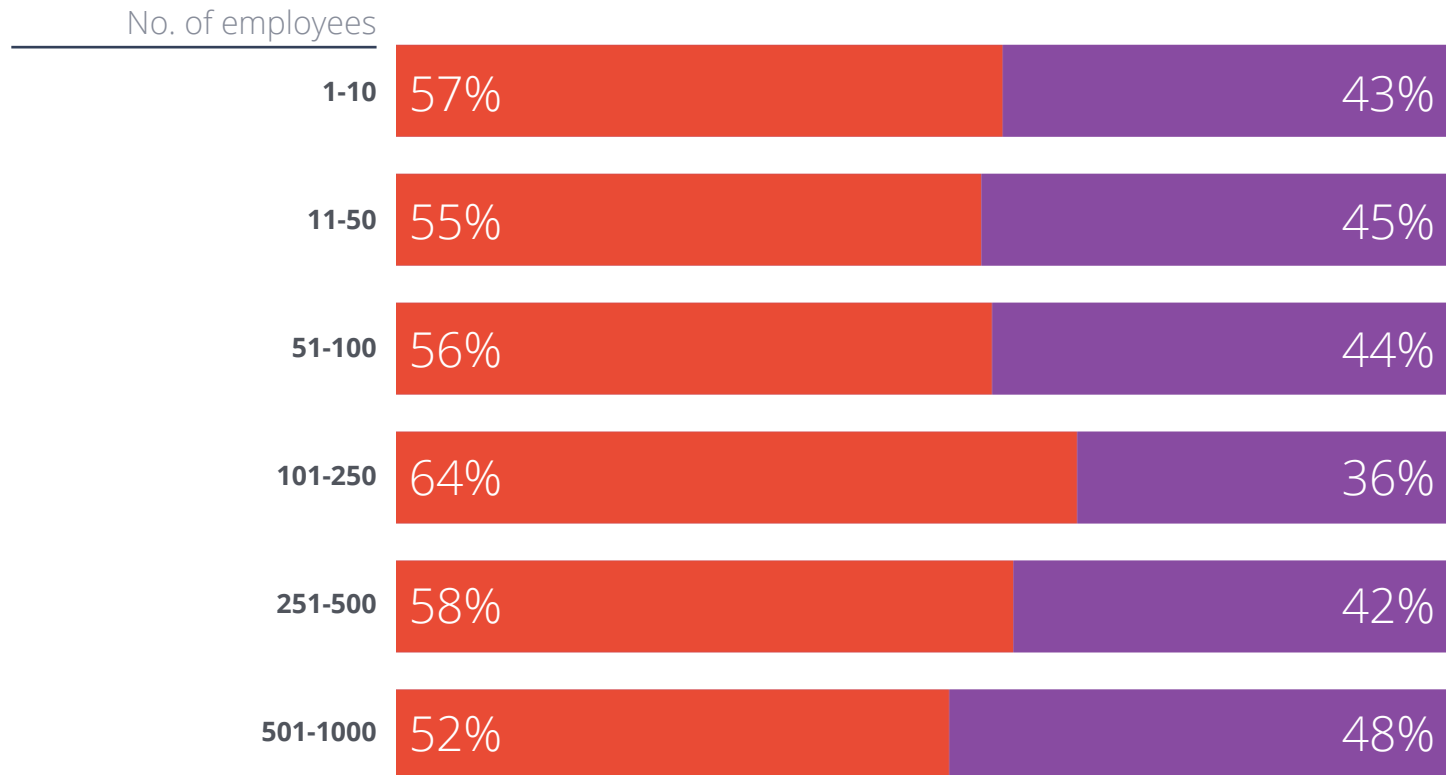


IT pros who don't keep their documentation up to date also have low network confidence.

| Documentation update frequency | Network confidence | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|-----|---------|------|-----------|
| | VERY LOW | LOW | NEUTRAL | HIGH | VERY HIGH |
| NEVER OR RARELY | 50% | 50% | 41% | 33% | 16% |
| MONTHLY | 25% | 10% | 10% | 11% | 10% |
| WEEKLY | 0% | 10% | 0% | 9% | 13% |
| DAILY | 25% | 0% | 7% | 7% | 8% |
| WHENEVER SOMETHING CHANGES | 0% | 30% | 42% | 39% | 53% |

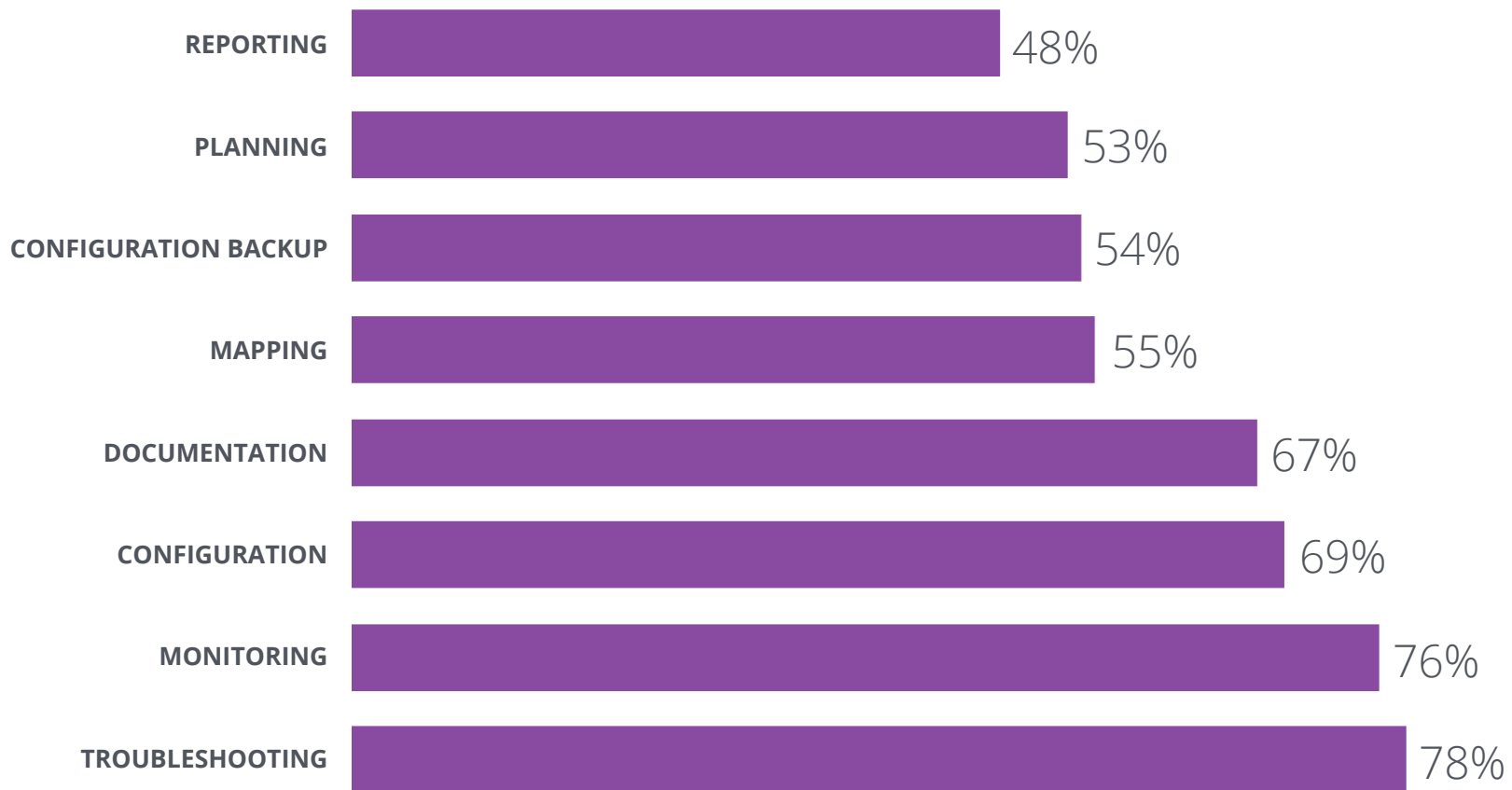
Companies spend more than half their time in reaction mode, also known as “break-fix” mode where technicians are focused on fixing things as they break. This is not efficient.

Time spent on
REACTIVE & **PROACTIVE** tasks



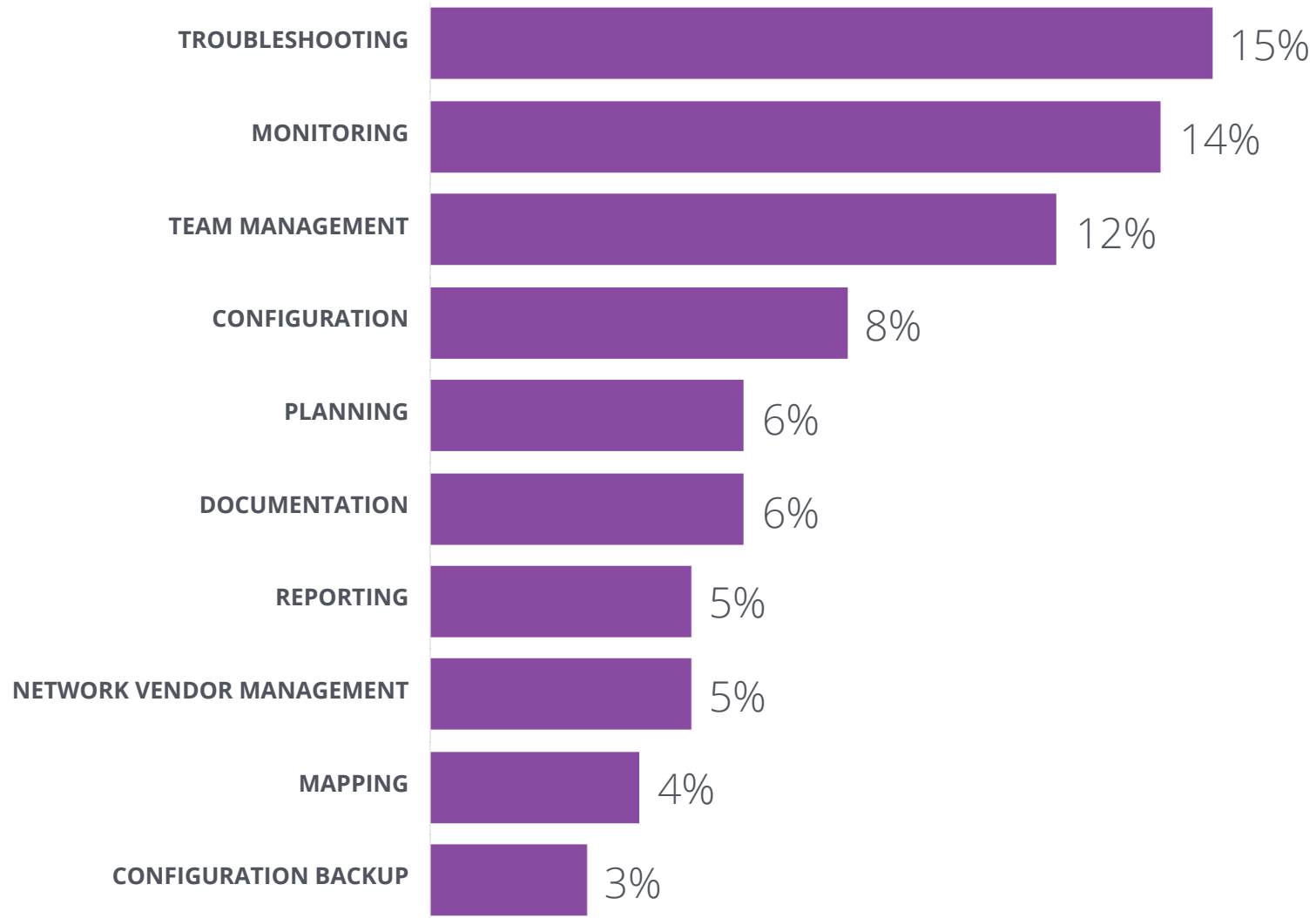
More than half of companies spend significant amounts of time on tasks that could be easily automated, such as mapping and configuration backup.

Almost half of companies do no network planning.



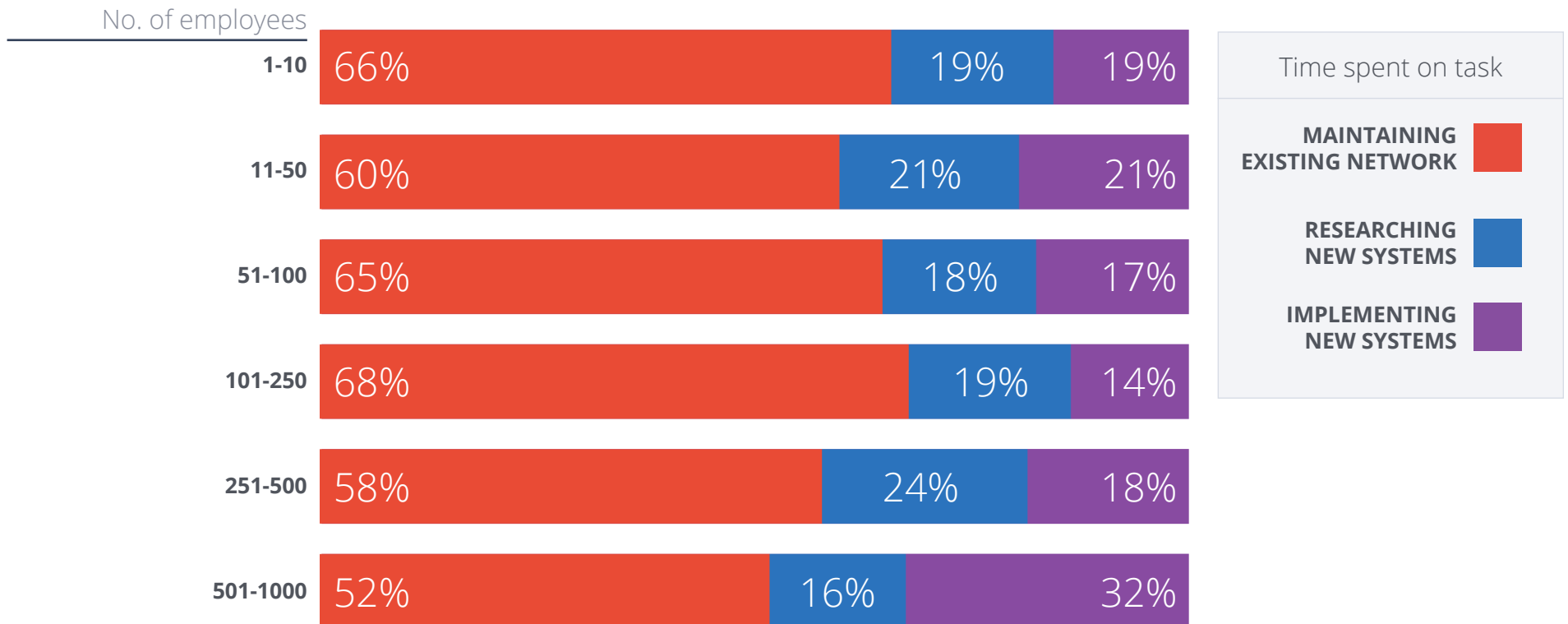
Network management activities, by percentage of companies who do them

More time is spent monitoring and troubleshooting networks than on anything else.

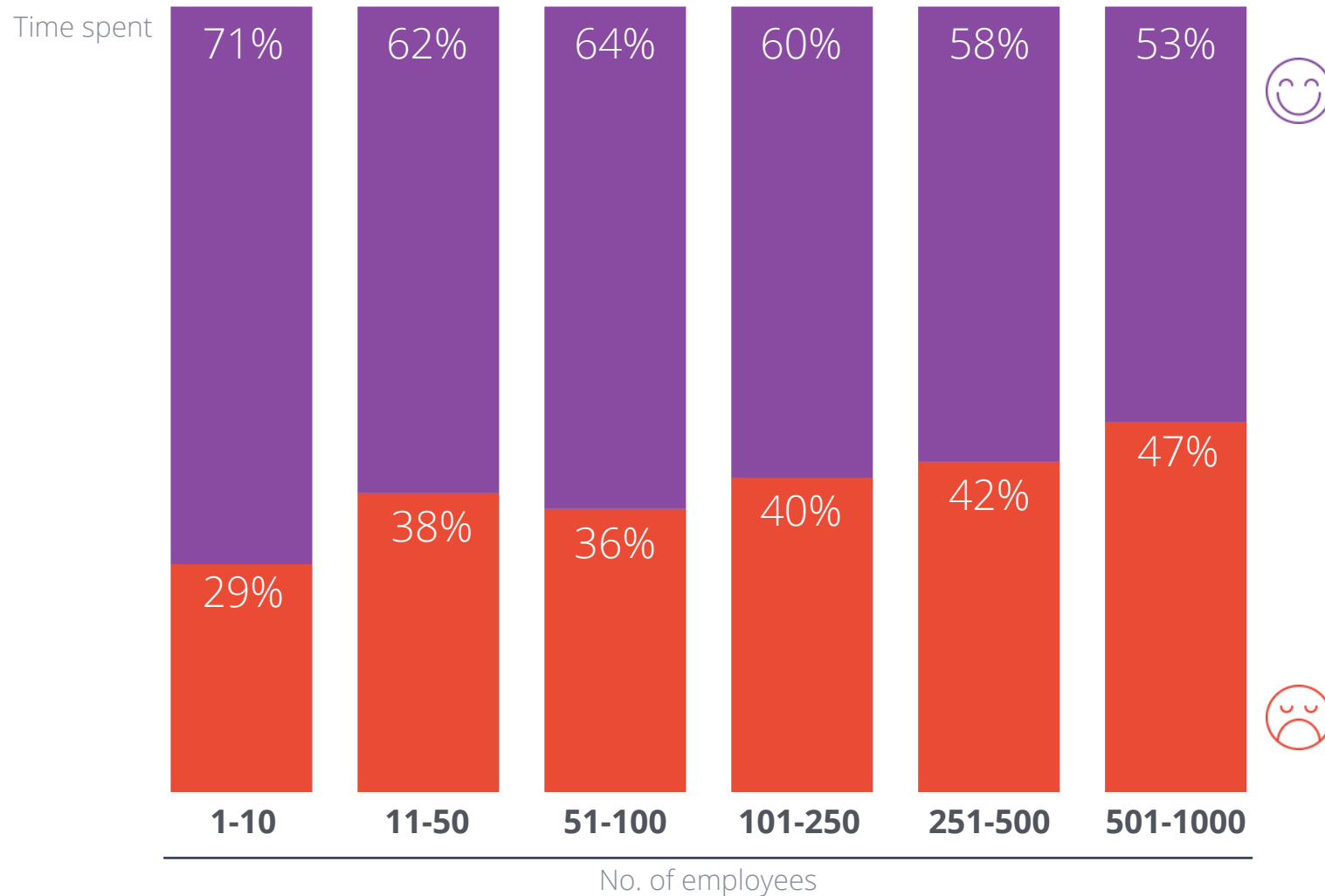


Network management activities, by percentage time spent in a week

Maintaining an existing network takes up the bulk of time for IT pros, leaving little time for investigating new or better solutions.



At most companies, IT pros spend more than a third of their time on projects they **hate or tolerate**.



The most popular wish-list projects for IT pros includes:

- Upgrading or rebuilding their network **(17%)**
- Implementing better monitoring for their network **(16%)**
- Doing a better job of mapping and documenting their network **(15%)**

A lack of time and budget are the two main blocks to completing these and other wish-list projects.



NOT ENOUGH TIME



NOT ENOUGH MONEY

IT workloads are too heavy. Most IT pros regularly work more than 40 hours a week.



Average work week, in hours

About the respondents

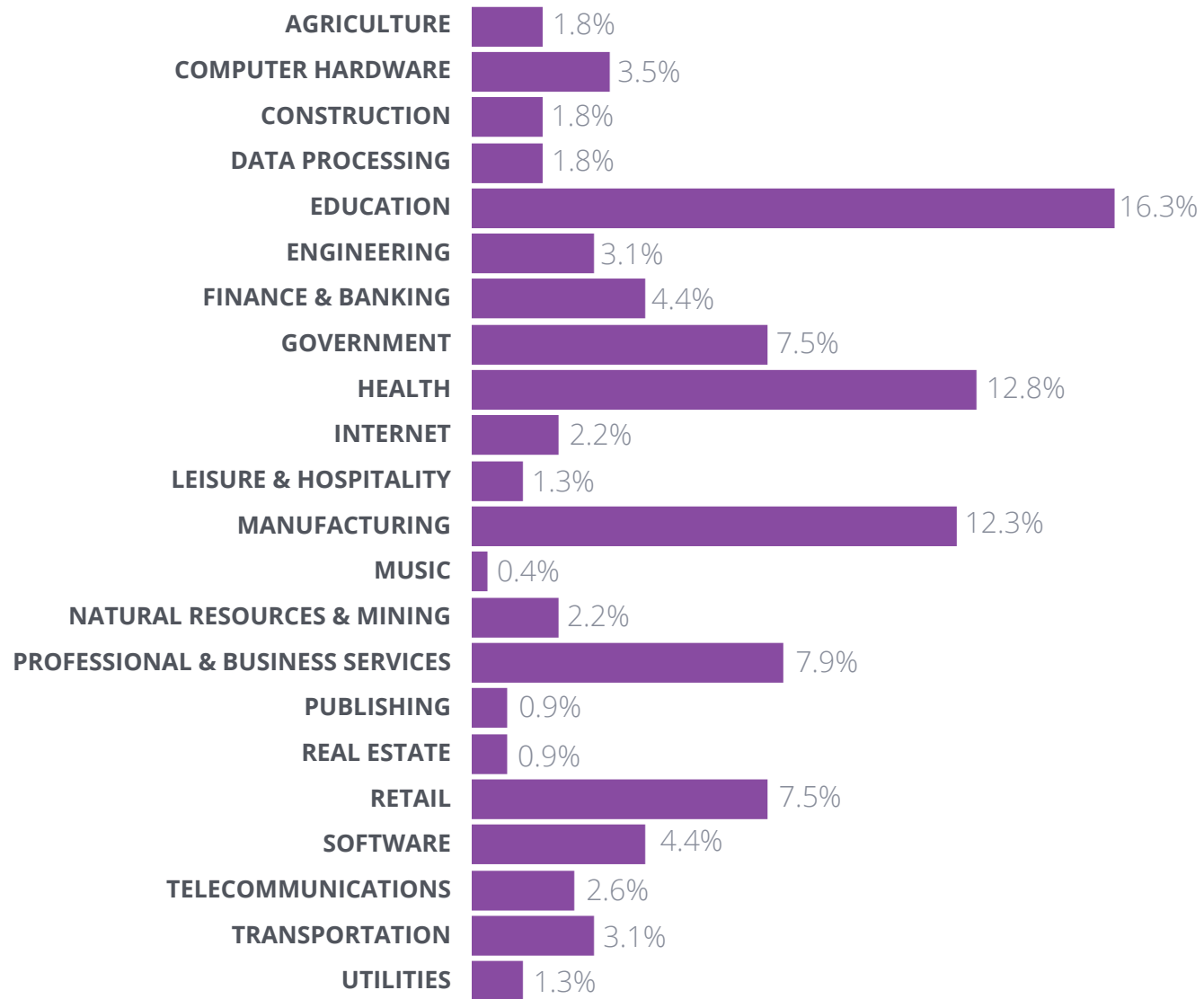
Auvik Networks ran the Network Field Report 2015 survey between October 21 and November 16, 2014. The query took the form of an online survey, to which there were 332 qualified complete and partial responses from IT professionals across the United States and Canada.

The survey was conducted using SurveyMonkey, and was promoted across several IT community boards. The incentive for participating was entry into a contest to win a quadricopter drone.

Results were extracted from SurveyMonkey and re-coded where necessary to convert text-based category responses to numerical categories. The results were analyzed using Excel, and in some cases, SPSS. Analysis consisted primarily of basic descriptives and cross-tabs.

The results show companies from a wide range of industries, with education, health and manufacturing heading the list. Median company age was 26-50 years in business, and most respondents had at least six years of IT experience. Companies ranged in size from those having one to 10 employees to organizations with more than 500 employees.

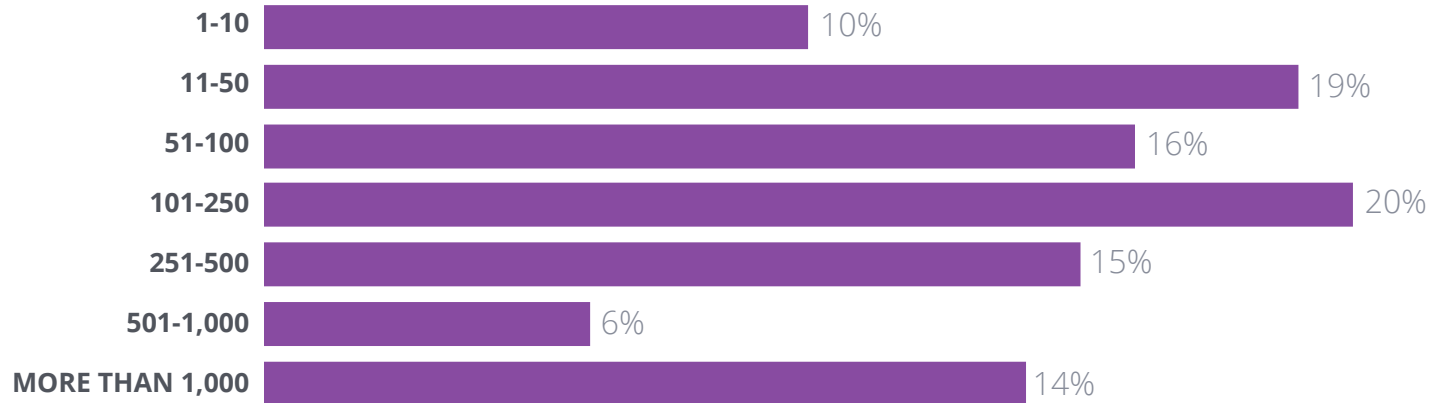
INDUSTRY



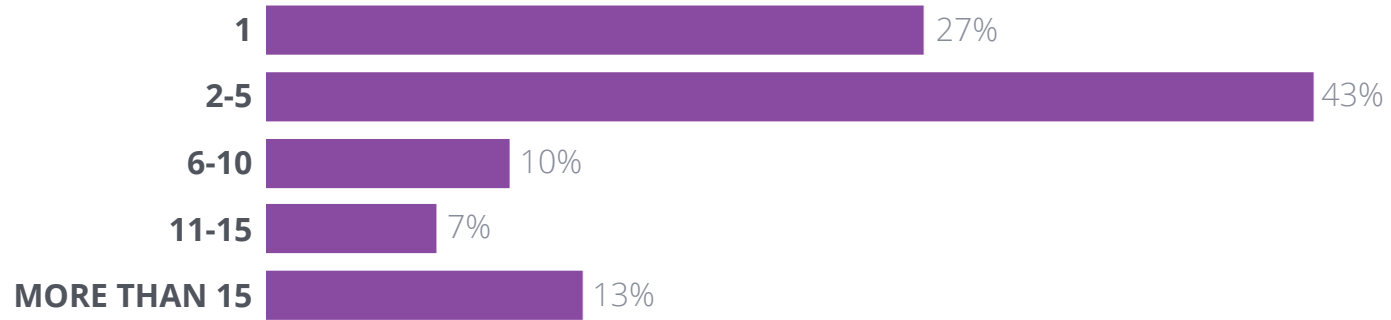
AGE OF COMPANY



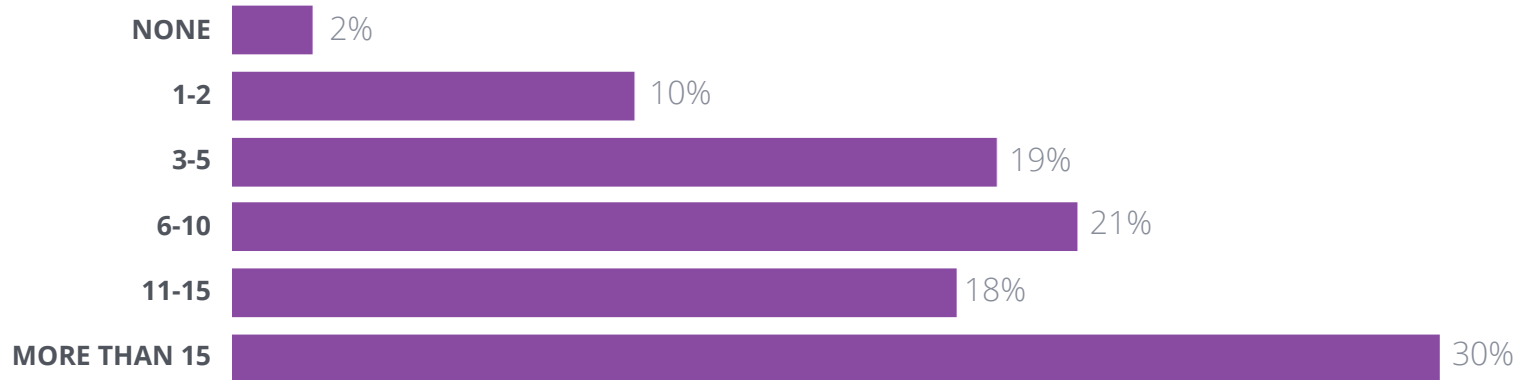
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES



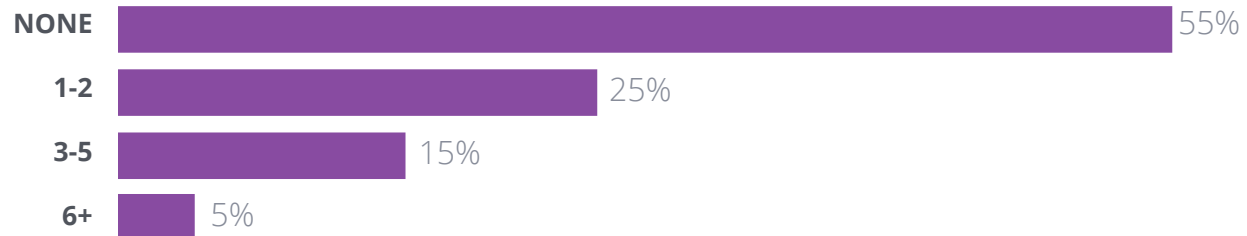
NUMBER OF IT EMPLOYEES



YEARS OF IT EXPERIENCE

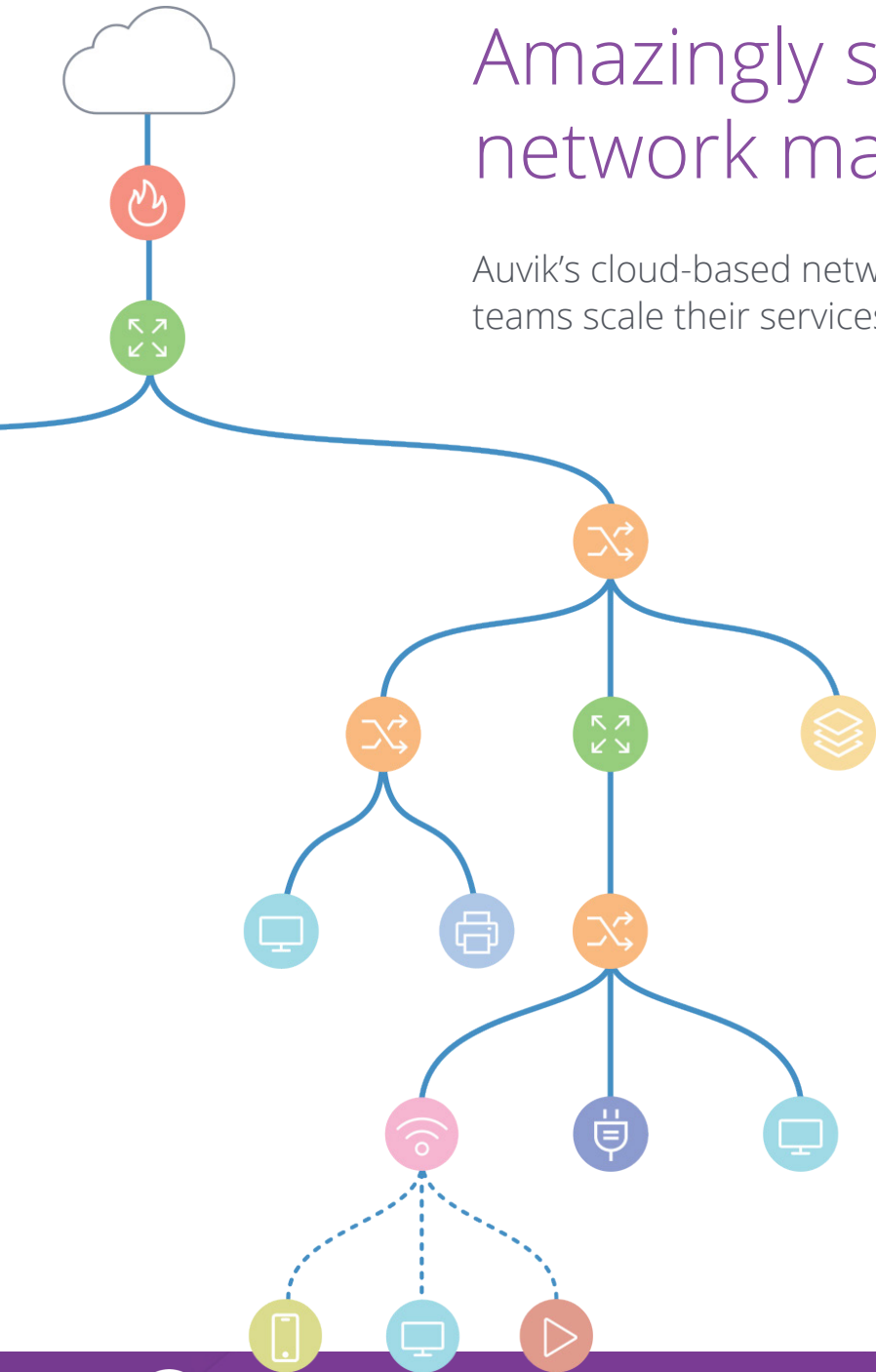


NUMBER OF CERTIFICATIONS



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