



2017 CompuCom Insights Series

Keeping Your IT on Pace with Technology Forces

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In our paper, *"Five Critical Technologies Impacting Enterprise Devices"*, we highlighted five key technology themes that are impacting your organization's devices — for both consumers and employees. In this paper, we focus on how your IT organization can prepare for and successfully utilize these trends to drive value for the business.

As consumer expectations of technology shift to reinforce the need for "anytime, anywhere" technology services, IT organizations are tasked with readying their IT infrastructure and services not only to satisfy consumer and employee preferences, but also to drive value for their organizations. Due to the high risks of implementation and servicing, many organizations choose to pair with an outsourcing partner.

Our insights are based on our 2017 CIO survey, where we interviewed top CIOs and technology executives from the Fortune 500 in 12 market segments — spanning retail to financial services — as well as our deep expertise in deploying solutions for clients over the past 30 years.

In this paper, you will learn about:

- Key activities IT leaders must prioritize to support technology trends.
- Questions IT leaders must use to assess IT readiness.
- How IT leaders can leverage experts to implement IT strategies.

Figure 1: 5 technology forces are impacting each level of the IT stack



Eight Key Activities IT Leaders Must Prioritize

While IT leaders agree that their IT budgets will increase, they do not plan on significantly re-allocating their budgets (Figure 2) to any particular IT stack component. IT leaders will be required to deliver more impact as they will have more resources at their disposal.

Organizations do not plan to significantly redistribute their budget. IT leaders need to present a provable ROI across every category of the IT stack where they make upgrades or new technology investments. On one hand, IT leaders must keep pace with planned incremental improvements in existing platforms. On the other hand, entirely new platforms must also be installed. These activities will be riskier, but should have higher upside potential.

73% of IT leaders we surveyed believe their IT budget will **increase** over the next 3-5 years



Figure 2: IT leaders do not expect to significantly re-allocate their budgets in the next 3-5 years to top 8 components of IT stack

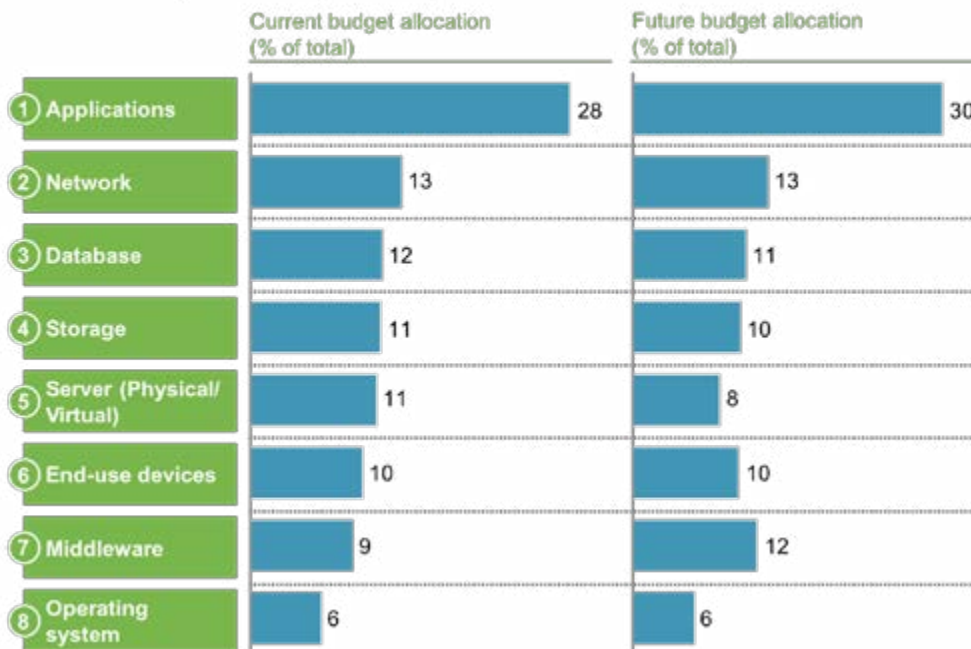
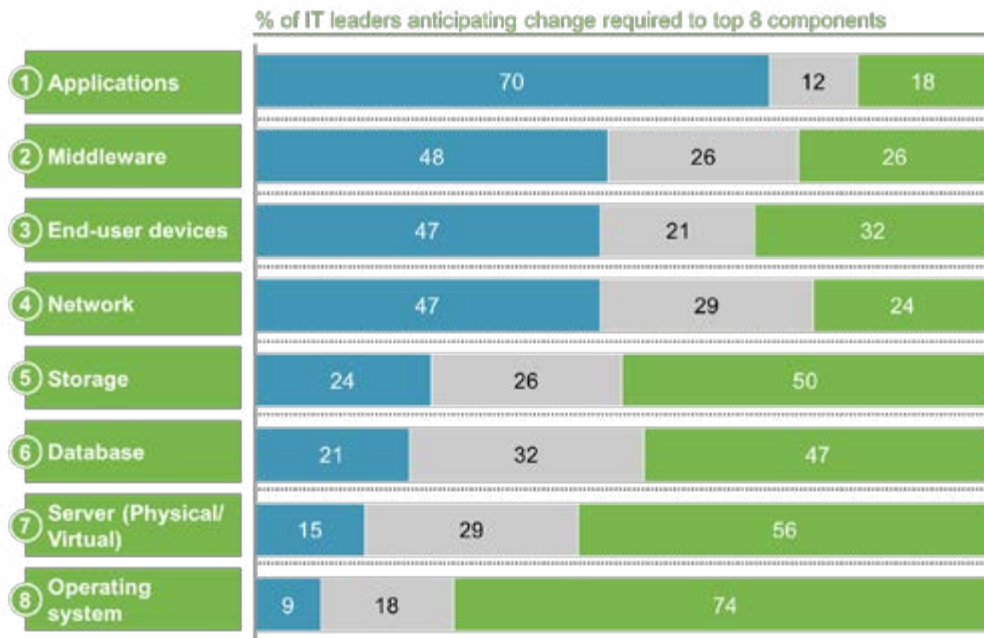


Figure 3: Applications, middleware and end-user devices will likely change most in the next 3-5 years

■ Dramatically change
■ Minimally change
■ Not change



When we surveyed IT leaders there was general consensus that there are three categories of the IT stack that require the most drastic change from their current state — applications, middleware and end-user devices. (Figure 3) IT leaders agree that there will be significant changes in software platforms and end-user devices driven by the five major technology trends. These changes are encapsulated in the eight major themes below:

1. Design a strategy for management and maintenance of the most advanced end-user on-premise devices. The proliferation of both company-owned and employee-owned devices (e.g. mobile phones, laptops), as well as on-premise devices (e.g. printers, digital signage) is putting greater pressure on IT leaders. They must support their employees with the necessary hardware and applications to provide value on-premise and to enable their consumers to access desired information quickly.
2. Actively secure all nodes (both on-location and employee devices) to reduce risk of cyberattack and ensure customer data protection. Proliferation of devices means exponentially more nodes available to cyberattack. IT departments must secure these potential points of failure in order to protect sensitive and confidential customer and company information. While ensuring compliance every quarter, every year is a must-have (e.g. PCI). Moving beyond compliance to fully becoming stewards of consumer Personally Identifiable Information (PII) will transform customer relationships.
3. Activate networks that are quick, responsive and accessible 24/7 as a business critical capability. Having highly responsive networks is no longer optional — it is a requirement of doing business. As bandwidth-hogging applications such as in-store video, surveillance footage and digital signage expand, strengthening wide-area network backbones at manageable cost is becoming critical. This will help ensure that consumers and employees have instant access to all the information they expect to have at any given moment.
4. Increase scalable storage and advanced applications to support data analytics. Organizations are rapidly accumulating data assets at rates that exceed revenue growth. Keeping storage costs under control requires finding scalable solutions that utilize the best mix of off-line, near-line and cloud storage.

Additionally, this data must be kept secure and readily available so that two primary audiences in organizations — data scientists and decision makers — can draw insights and develop strategies to drive business value.

5. Create a front-end experience that delivers best-in-class consumer design.
IT organizations must optimize front-end experiences through comprehensive A/B testing and develop applications in a fast IT environment to enable responsiveness to rapidly changing employee and consumer preferences. The importance of good design for employees is especially critical, as employee turnover and the increase in digital tools necessitates the ability to quickly train employees on systems and processes.
6. Focus on cost reduction to support larger IT investments.
As overall budgets increase but budget allocations stay relatively unchanged, IT leaders must maintain incremental changes with less spend so they can invest in new, bigger and bolder IT initiatives.
7. Push Agile development more deeply into IT organizations.
Deliver results iteratively (rather than in large, isolated pieces), identify quality issues early and respond quickly to consumer and business needs by implanting Agile development more deeply into IT organizations — not only within front-end teams.
8. Create a robust middleware abstraction layer that integrates legacy back-end and new front-end systems.
Creating a responsive middleware environment allows legacy IT systems to fully support the needs of newer front-end systems, which aim to deliver delightful consumer and employee experiences.

Assessing IT Readiness

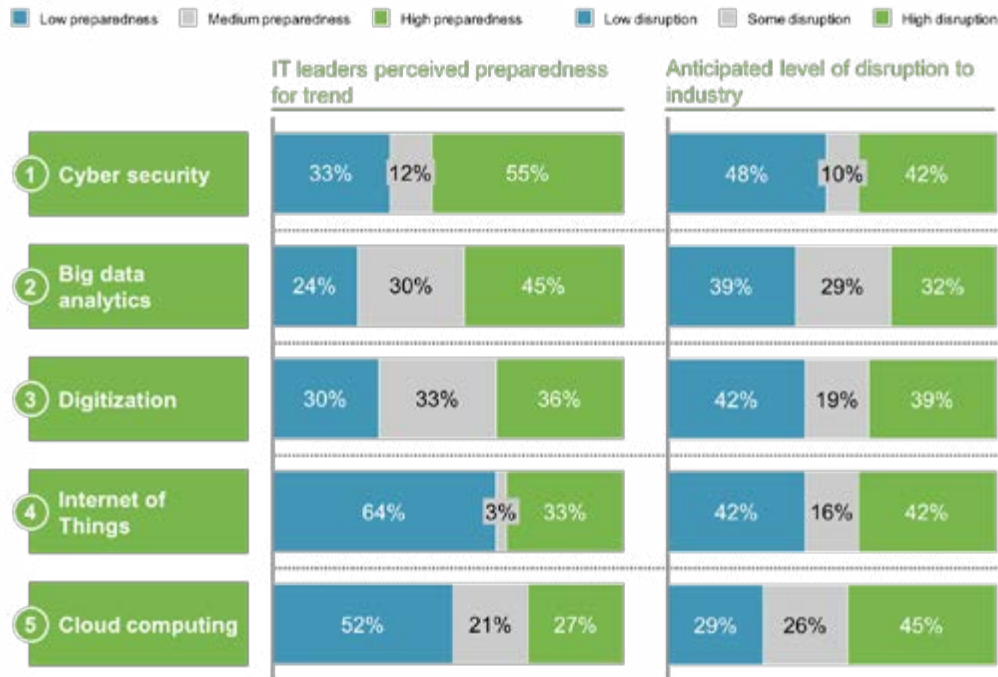
IT leaders believe that there will be significant disruption to their industries by the technology trends identified, yet many feel unprepared in their abilities to support them. While all believe there will be some level of disruption, technology trends differ in the scale of impact. All IT leaders agree that they are less prepared than they would like to be. (Figure 4)

There are disparities between where CIOs believe they are prepared and where they anticipate disruption to happen. For example, CIOs feel unprepared for IoT and cloud computing, but believe it will cause a great amount of disruption to their industry. Many CIOs think they are highly prepared for cyberattacks, but from our experience there is a severe lack of security for end-user devices.

76% of CIOs we surveyed agree with us that it is essential to use a readiness assessment



Figure 4: IT leaders feel prepared for cybersecurity, but anticipate cloud to disrupt the industry the most



Eight Quick Tests to Assess Readiness

Many IT leaders assess their IT readiness to understand where major gaps exist in their organization. Sometimes IT leaders struggle with finding the right questions to ask themselves or they ask the wrong questions and end up with lackluster end results. After speaking with IT leaders in over 12 segments, we have compiled a list of the top questions to get your organization thinking about how to fill the most vital gaps.

1. What are you doing to ensure compliance and make sure all employee-owned devices and applications are up to date with internal software systems and networks?
2. How are you thinking of protecting business critical systems against intrusions through more device nodes?
3. How well are your networks and data infrastructure set up to handle increased amounts of data and analysis?
4. What are you doing to ensure that the business does not lose control over core functions that are migrated to off-premise cloud?
5. How are you ensuring that your front-end applications are consistent with cutting edge consumer design principles?
6. What tools and processes do you have in place to ensure that you are optimizing IT spend amidst cost efficiency pressures?
7. How are you using Agile development to break down silos among business leaders in different functions (e.g. marketing and IT)?
8. How are you integrating legacy IT systems with new front-end systems to ensure functionality is not being compromised?

Leverage the Experts

An IT services partner can help you transform your business by capitalizing on, rather than being disrupted by, these technology trends. An IT services partner can assess your IT organizational readiness and identify gaps in achieving your IT target state. A partner can also help you design your short-, medium- and long-term IT device strategy using the asset ownership model that works best for you (e.g. own versus lease infrastructure). Many outsourcing partners aid organizations in selecting a set of vendors that can best deliver the organization's goals. Having done similar projects many times, the partner is an expert in implementing IT projects with minimal disruption to ongoing business operations and can even continue to support the repair and maintenance of the systems and devices once installation is complete. Most importantly, a services partner can proactively suggest new ways you can stay ahead of the curve and build on your technology capabilities.

Conclusion

As IT leaders, you need to ensure the readiness of your systems, align functions with your organization to reach agreement on goals and find a good partner that can help you navigate upcoming challenges in order to ensure your IT organization and systems are ready to embark on their missions. In our other papers — *Pain Points Affecting Retail IT Leaders*, *Biggest Mistakes Financial Services Technology Leaders Can Avoid* and *Five Biggest Mistakes that CIOs Can Avoid* — we discuss what pain points IT leaders are experiencing and common mistakes that you should avoid.

Key Takeaways

- IT budgets are increasing, but IT leaders are not significantly re-allocating their budgets to any single component of the IT stack.
- IT leaders expect many components of the IT stack to change dramatically in the next three to five years, creating the need for IT leaders to assess their readiness and align on key activities to outsource.
- Many IT leaders feel least prepared for technology trends they see as the biggest disruptors to the industry.

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