



A 2020 PETRI.COM AUDIENCE SURVEY ON THE

COVID-19 IMPACT ON THE IT PRO

The 2020 COVID-19 Impact on the IT Pro

Petri.com is an IT Pro knowledgebase where our audience turns to us for business technology information (articles, podcasts, seminars, webinars, whitepapers, and more). Every year, millions of IT Pros visit Petri.com when they are having a problem and need immediate help solving an issue with their operations; and/or, when the IT pro is looking to sharpen their skills with a new solution they are implementing or evaluating.

Annually, we survey our audience to understand who they are and what upcoming concerns and priorities they have for the year. Even though in late 2019, we ran our [2020 Petri.com Audience Survey](#) to understand our IT Pros' plans for the coming year, we felt it necessary to check back in with this same audience as we knew their entire worlds must have shifted after the COVID-19 pandemic.

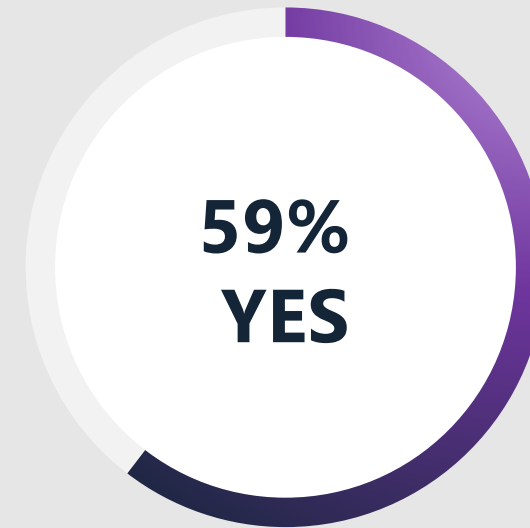


Summary of insights from this survey include:

- 1) Plans have changed for half of the IT Pros since the onset of COVID-19 on this list while the other half are continuing business as usual mostly due to their organizations already practicing remote work.
- 2) Budgets are tighter overall after the onset of COVID-19 but there is no tightening of the belt for collaboration tools due to a newly remote workforce. However, some respondents in our organization are feeling less job security even as they are being asked to do more with less.
- 3) Interestingly, most IT Pros are feeling time management issues having to support end-users during on and off hours alike. At the same time of feeling overburdened with end-user responsibilities, they also state feeling more respected by the leadership in their organization.
- 4) Overwhelmingly and quite surprisingly, IT Pros seem satisfied with their organization's security protocols that were in place pre-COVID-19. Even though we know attacks have heightened on organizations and individuals, our audience reports that the security protocols they had in place are still satisfactory. We are keeping an eye on this data point.

**Have your
technology plans
changed since
January 1, 2020?**

**More than half of IT Pros plans have
changed since the onset of COVID-19**

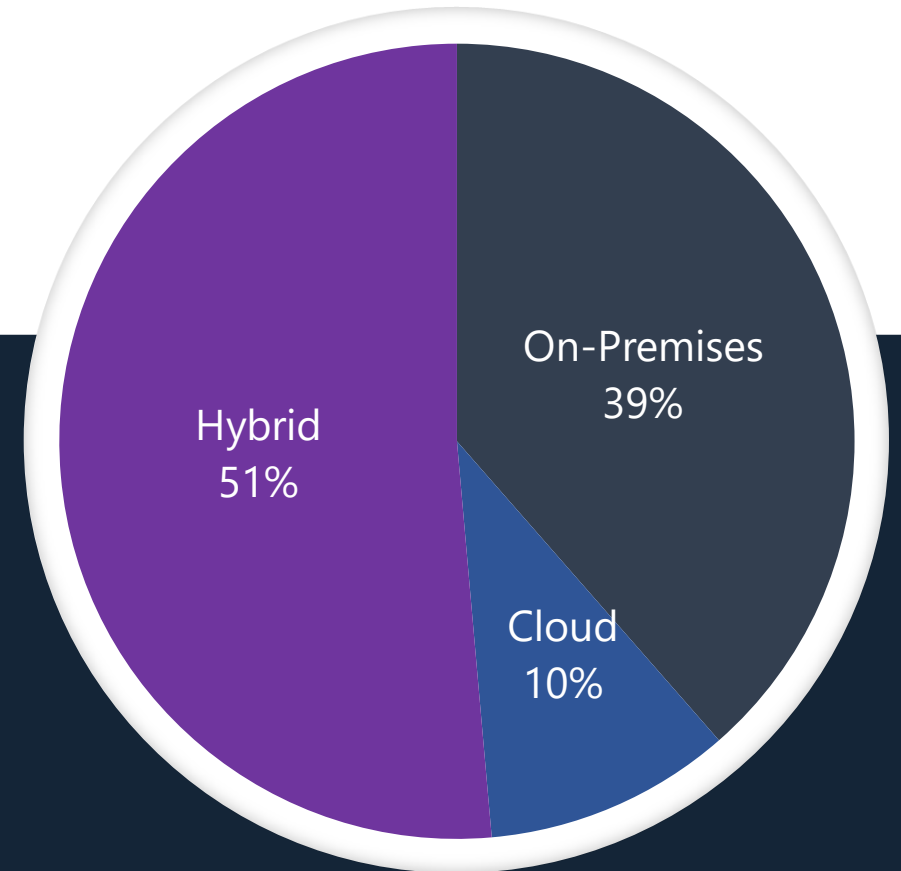


It's always hard to predict the future but the arrival of the COVID-19 Pandemic has had a significant impact on budgets and forecasts across the IT industry. Our Petri.com audience survey indicates that for more than half of those who responded, plans and budgets have changed since January 1st, 2020.

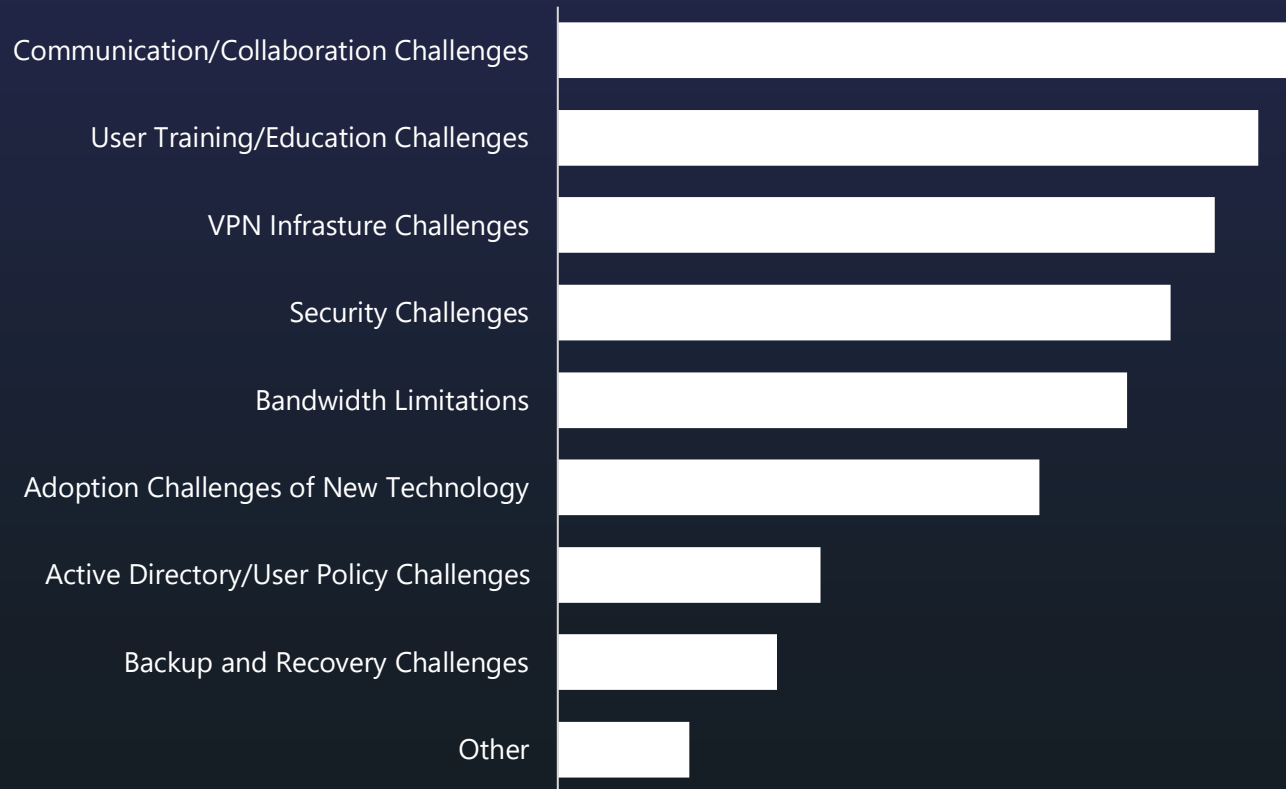
While the "cloud" is one of the biggest buzzwords of the industry, the truth is that a significant number of operations are still on-premises and more are likely a hybrid environment. Nearly 40% of operations are on-premises meaning that a remote workforce is likely not possible. IT Pros are anxious about having to support both physical and remote operations during COVID-19.

“(We) IT has to be on site... That is the biggest take away from COVID-19. Most other office workers have the option to work from home, IT has to be there in case the servers go down (physically), something breaks, Firewall, telephone system etc. resets and a host of other vital components that can't be managed remotely - or if they go down, you need physical access to get them going again.”

My operation is primarily:

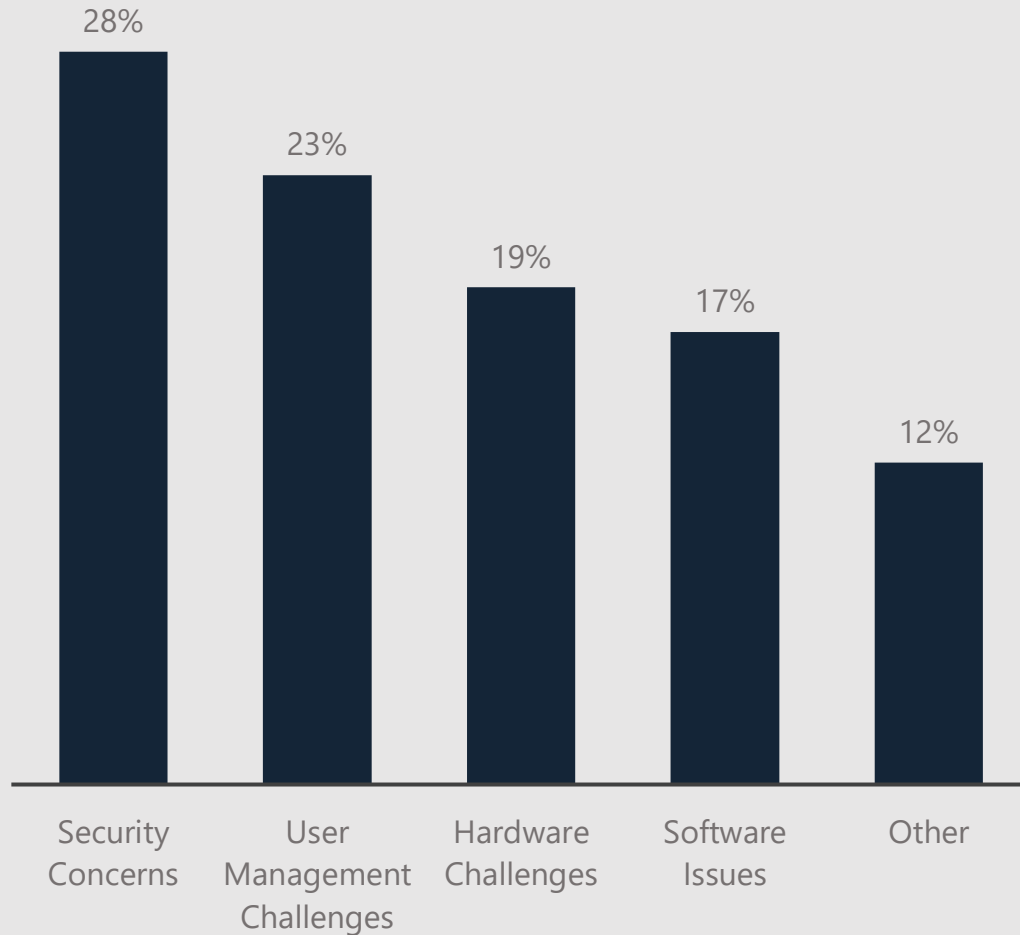


What new challenges are you experiencing since the onset of COVID-19?



With most organizations moving to a work-from-home operation, this highlighted friction points of a remote workforce. Of the challenges reported, Communication, VPN'ing, Training, Security and Bandwidth were the top issues reported from this new workflow. This isn't all that surprising as nearly overnight, there was a huge influx of data being moved outside the office to and from servers located on-premises.

The single biggest challenge I am facing today is:



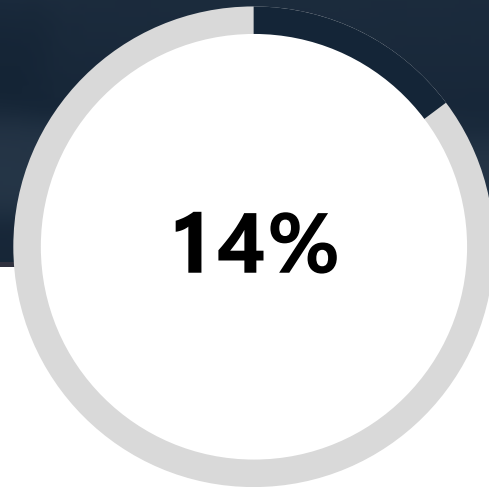
Currently, the top challenge IT Pros face is securing data

When it comes to the biggest challenge since the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic, security takes the crown, followed by user management related issues.

Security concerns are not all that surprising and ties into the new challenges reported by Petri.com's IT Pro audience. With more users now working remotely, additional authentication mechanisms need to be implemented to make sure that data created, inflight and at rest, is always secured.

Security is the biggest concern of the IT Pro since COVID-19 but an overwhelming number (71%) of IT Pros reported that they are happy with their pre-COVID-19 security protocols. This leads to the IT Pro not concerned with processes defined for pre-COVID-19 operations but speaks of a new concern weighing on the IT Pro around remote end-user vulnerabilities and mis-steps from new attacks.

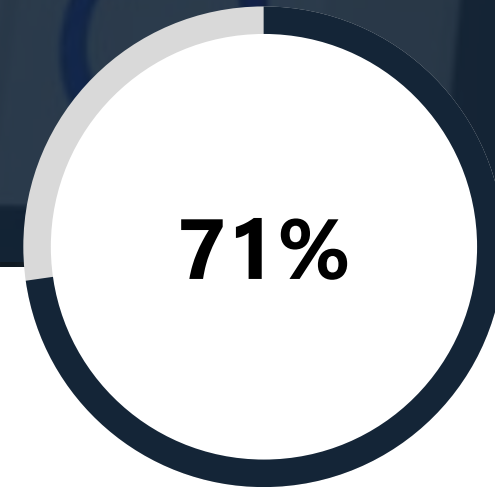
Since the onset of COVID-19, I am:



LESS CONFIDENT IN
MY SECURITY CONTROLS



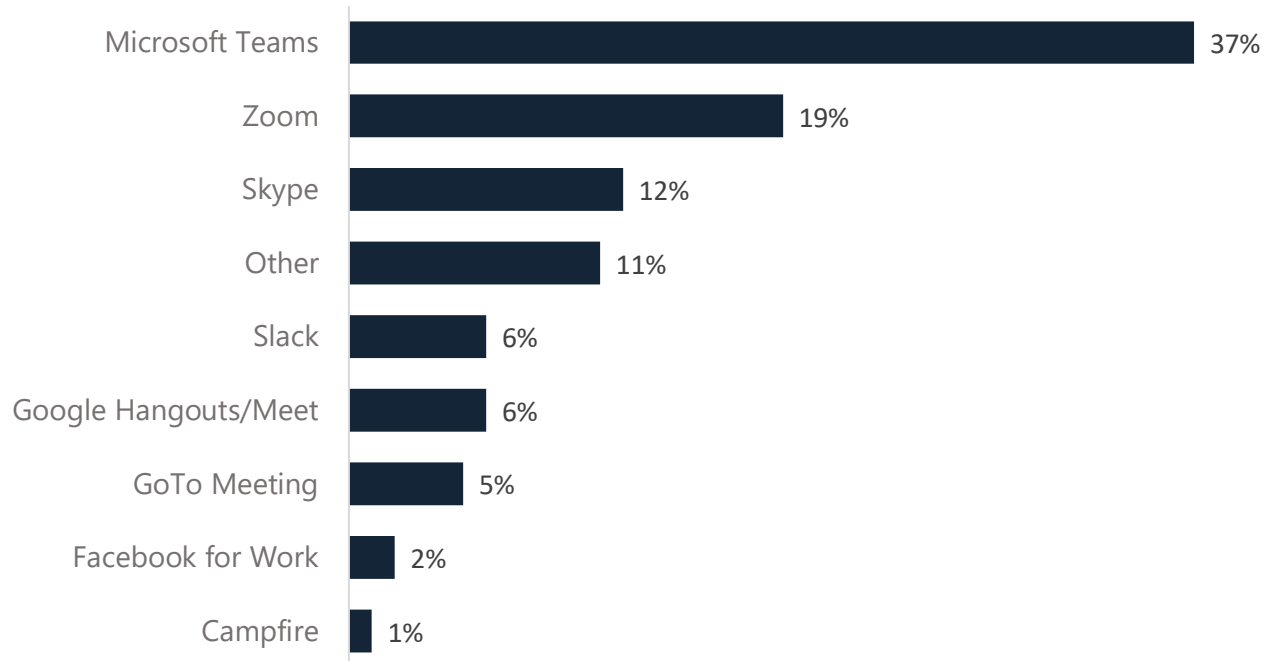
MORE CONFIDENT IN
MY SECURITY CONTROLS



AS CONFIDENT AS PRE-COVID-19
IN MY SECURITY CONTROLS

Despite the increased activity now happening outside the office, most IT Pros stated that they were as confident in their existing controls that were implemented prior to COVID-19. This isn't too surprising, as building robust security framework is required even without a pandemic. However, the previous questions acknowledges that the increased external activity by employees does make securing your data an evergreen challenge.

What tools are you using to communicate with remote workers?

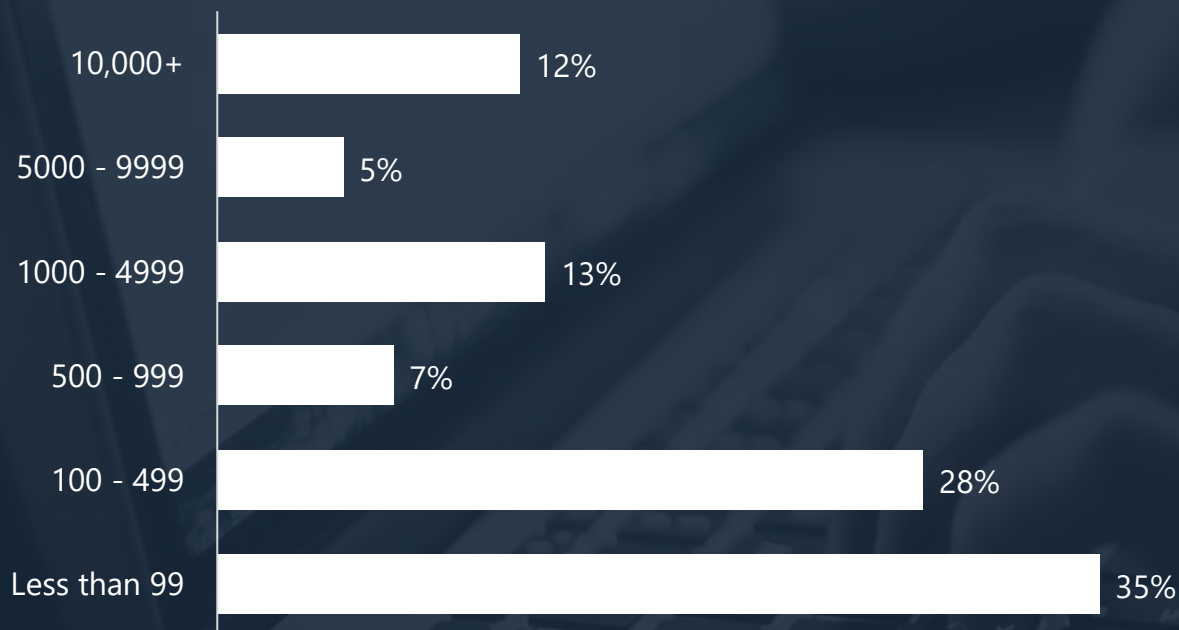


Microsoft Teams leads the way as the preferred communication tool for our IT Pros remote end-users

Among collaboration tools being used to communicate with remote workers, Teams is leading the way, but it's also clear that there are a wide variety of solutions being utilized. Zoom is a clear choice as an alternative to Teams. Somewhat surprising is that Slack usage is much smaller than anticipated, but that may be a result of nearly two-thirds of the respondents stating that they have more than 100 employees in their organization which is where Microsoft Teams and Office 365 functions better than G Suite and Slack. Also, not surprising is the remote workforce is using a combination of tools, for example, Zoom as a primary and then Skype as a back-up solution. And, according to our IT Pros, users are using platforms not sanctioned by IT making IT scramble to support unapproved platforms.

The respondents of this survey represent small, medium and enterprise sized organizations. With roughly a third being under 100 employees, a third being 100 - 999, and a third being considered enterprise-class companies, 1,000 plus employees.

How many employees are at your organization?



**The Petri.com audience
respondents represented
IT Pros from small,
medium and enterprise
sized organizations**

Are you looking to deploy any new solutions to help ease remote work challenges?

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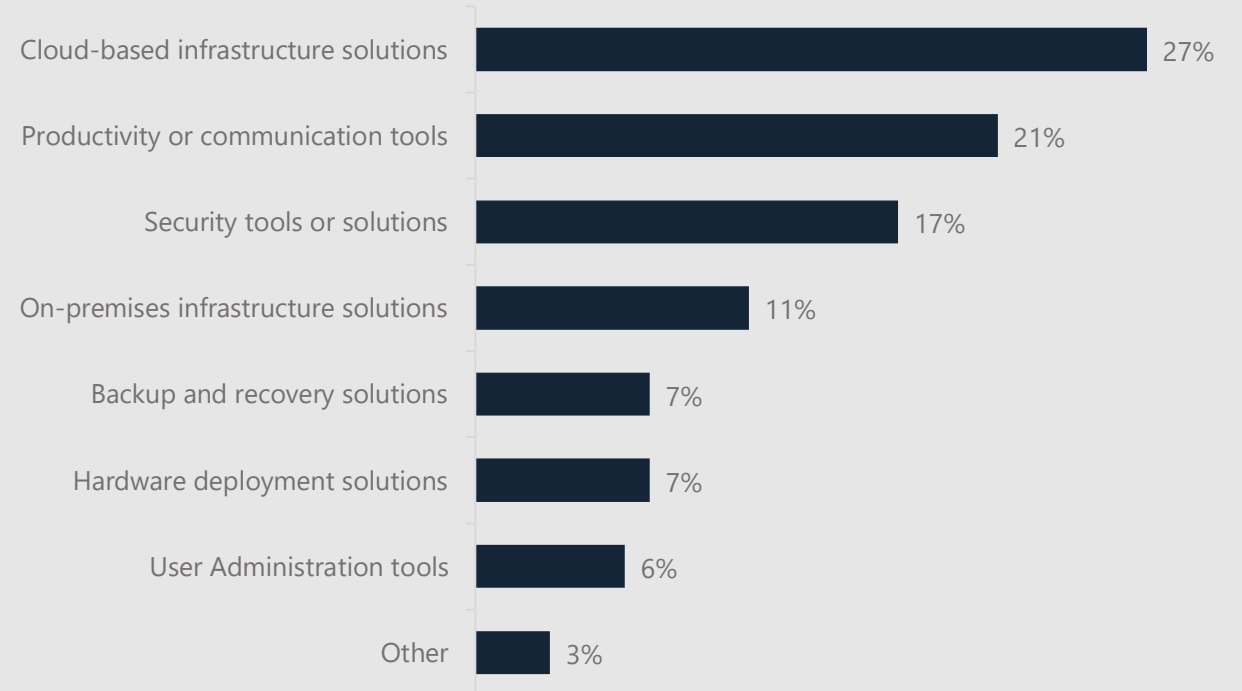
Yes **49%**

No **51%**

Despite highlighting new budget challenges from the COVID-19 crisis and thanks to the newly remote workforce, nearly half (49%) of those who responded indicated that they are looking for new solutions to deploy that will help them improve the management of remote workers and the hardware that they currently utilize. Reportedly, while the IT Pros' budgets may be smaller than at the start of the year, the market for improving collaboration between employees is not being constrained.

What type of solution are you looking to deploy?

Solutions IT Pros are looking to deploy during COVID-19



Given the challenges of supporting remote workers, it's not surprising to see that most respondents are looking to deploy new cloud-based solutions. This type of a product is much easier to scale than on-premises software. Further, the solutions that respondents are looking to deploy are communication and productivity tools to assist the remote workforce.

Please explain how your technology deployment plans have changed?

Our Petri.com survey respondents reported on experiencing several similar themes in relationship to how their deployment plans have changed. Most reported having to suddenly roll out collaboration solutions in record time to keep end-users working remotely. The IT Pros also reported that most planned projects have been put on hold while a reevaluation process takes place in their organizations covering the gamut from hardware investments (going from a desktop to laptop environment) to finding cloud solutions for on-premise business software solutions. There was also a strong theme of budgets for planned projects disappearing completely or being put on hold indefinitely. And, if budgets weren't effected, our IT Pros reported projects have still been put on hold because IT resources are being capitalized to support a remote workforce. Some of our respondents mentioned that their jobs have changed completely as has their overall company stating concerns about company revenue vanishing due to COVID-19. Some of our IT Pros are feeling great pressures from concerns about company stability to operational stability while others in larger enterprises found themselves concerned about shifts in strategies and end-user hardware and communication support.

“ I’ve had a sudden release of funds to replace all staff laptops. Our plans to migrate to Office 365 were put on hold for 12 months, then lockdown arrived so we did a 6-week migration in 3 days. ”

“ Rolling out Teams, even though company policy is no cloud. ”

“ Slowed purchase and roll-out of new technologies as people are forced to work off-site. Focus has shifted to maintaining status quo and taking care of existing clients (to keep money coming in) ”

“ Doing less infrastructure changes due to cost. Focus on remote technology and faster move to cloud. ”

Please share any other ways COVID-19 has impacted your role as an IT Pro?

Our survey respondents gave answers from one end of the spectrum to the other end for this question. We received answers of "none" to "everything" when reporting on how else has COVID-19 impacted your role as an IT Pro. There were far less "none" answers than there were answers for IT Pros telling us that their roles have significantly changed. The most common theme for what has change for the IT Pros was around time. IT Pros stated that their workloads have increased because they felt they were now a 24-hour support and consulting resource for their end-users. Other comments for this question dealt with how they have more work, more uncertainty, less visibility and less access to the end-user's environment making it harder to support colleagues, and just more to manage. Our IT Pro audience also reported that even though they are feeling more pressure to support more of the business, they are also feeling an increase in respect from leadership for what they do and felt like "less of a target" in their organizations. The final overarching theme from our IT Pro audience evolved around having less job security in their current role and using the work from home time to brush up on new IT skills.

“ Our workload has increased exponentially and all of us are being asked to support the business downward. As a server engineer, the majority of my day to day is now end user troubleshooting. ”

“ Management is more into IT! ”

“ Management have been encouraging use of new tools and technologies without running them by my team first. We're scrambling to provide documentation and guidance on safe usage after people are establishing behavior patterns. Users are also finding their own solutions that sometimes sidestep IT. ”



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Learn how to reach our IT Pro audience.

For inquiries, contact: hello@bwwmediagroup.com

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