



Q ASSOCIATES

# IT Survey Results

Independent UK Survey  
of IT Priorities

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2021

# What **trends** are in store for 2021?

Technology trends in 2021 will be the driving force in helping organisations navigate a changed reality. Q Associates wanted to find out more about the core digital transformation trends and the fresh technologies set to shape it. To do this we reached out to over 1000 senior IT professionals to see what they had to say.





## We asked IT leaders around the country six questions

**Q1.** What are the primary focus areas for your 2021 **IT strategy**?

**Q2.** Who is leading technology change/digital transformation in **your organisation**?

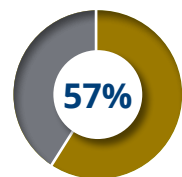
**Q3.** What impact are you expecting on your **IT budget** for 2021?

**Q4.** Which **major challenges** are you most concerned about for 2021?

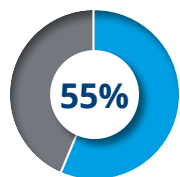
**Q5.** Please categorise how the following **technology vendors** align with your IT strategy for 2021?

**Q6.** Whose input is most valuable to you when making strategic **IT decisions** for your organisation?

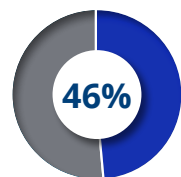
... here are the results.



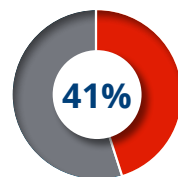
Remote Working



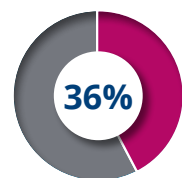
Cyber Security



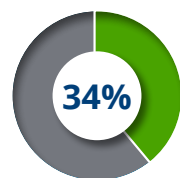
Public Cloud (e.g. AWS, Google, Azure)



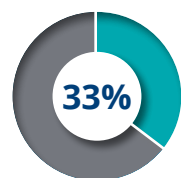
Data Protection & Compliance



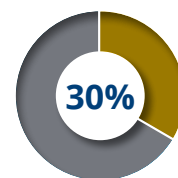
Automation



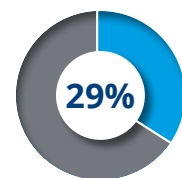
SaaS Applications / Cloud Applications



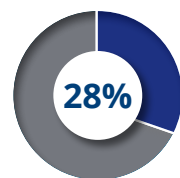
Hybrid (Multi) Cloud



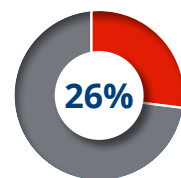
Data Analytics



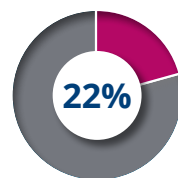
Workplace Modernisation



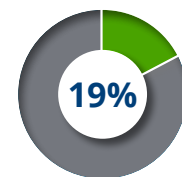
Networking



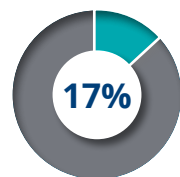
Application Integration



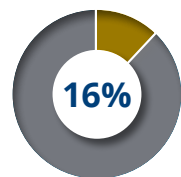
Data Centre Modernisation



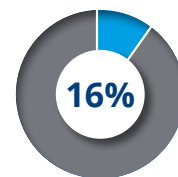
End User Computing (EUC)



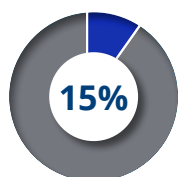
High Performance (GPU) Computing



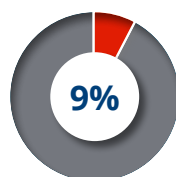
AI / Machine Learning



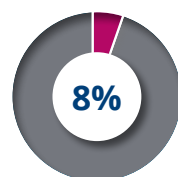
Hyper Converged Infrastructure



Software Defined Data Centre (SDDC)



Converged Infrastructure



Other\*

## What are the primary focus areas for your 2021 IT strategy?

Amid the upheaval and abrupt change to our work practices in the last 12 months, there are no surprises that remote working comes out top in this poll, with cyber security and public cloud close behind.

While 2020 may be considered the year of remote work, it is just the beginning as we see the trend set to continue for 2021. Cyber security has moved from first to second place with 55% of all respondents reporting that it continues to be a primary focus.

Public cloud also continues to gain popularity and acceptance, with an increasing number of people relying on cloud offerings to provide scalable solutions that facilitate anywhere operations. With data migration a priority for many enterprises, research shows that data protection and compliance has significantly increased in line with public cloud focus, as organisations move to a hybrid environment.

*\*Other: Data Governance; Data Integration, user IT support & helpdesk improvement, client collaboration, process and business opportunities, metrics, KPIs, KPOs, digital innovation, cloud backup technologies, Ecommerce - online customer journey, data storage, digital transformation, application consolidation.*

# Who is leading technology change/digital transformation in **your organisation?**

IT Management

66%

CIO

42%

Infrastructure Team

29%

CTO

19%

Networking and Security

16%

Digital Transformation

15%

CEO

15%

Other\*

8%

Finance

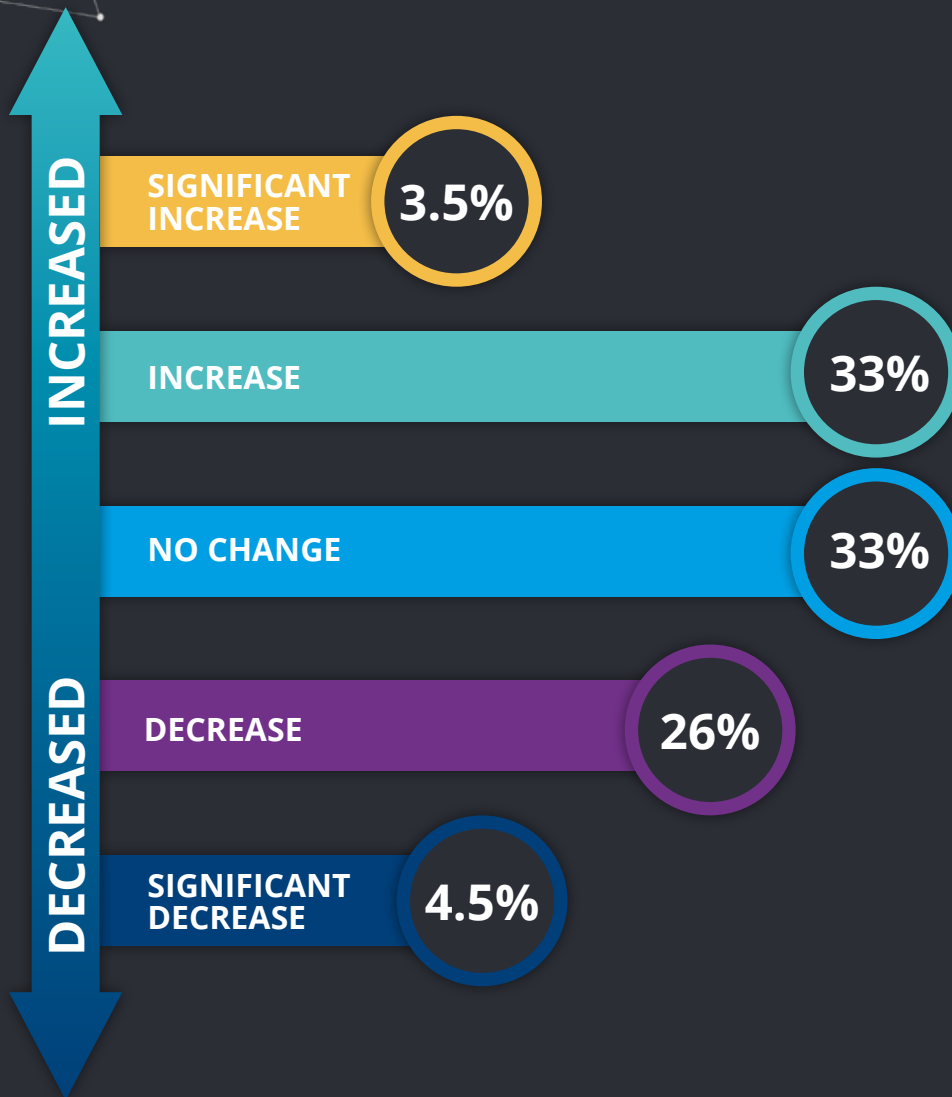
5%

Sales and Marketing

3%

When it comes to change, ensuring an organisation has the right people in the driving seat will make digital transformation a much smoother, more effective process. We're seeing an increase in the influence of C-level execs, suggesting technology performance has become critical to business success.

*\*Other: Chief Digital Officer, IT Director, Strategy Team, IT Strategy & Change Director, Product Management, CFO, Departmental Tech Teams, Business Improvement Team, Bioinformatics Team, Architecture & Strategy, Cross-functional Transformation Team.*



## What impact are you expecting on your **IT budget** for 2021?

For many organisations, budget cuts are expected following the major global impact of COVID-19.

The percentage of IT leaders experiencing a decrease in budget has risen from 20% to 30%.

But in a welcome contrast, nearly 70% of all respondents have the same or increased amount of IT spend available as last year – suggesting a continued investment in IT to drive business forward.

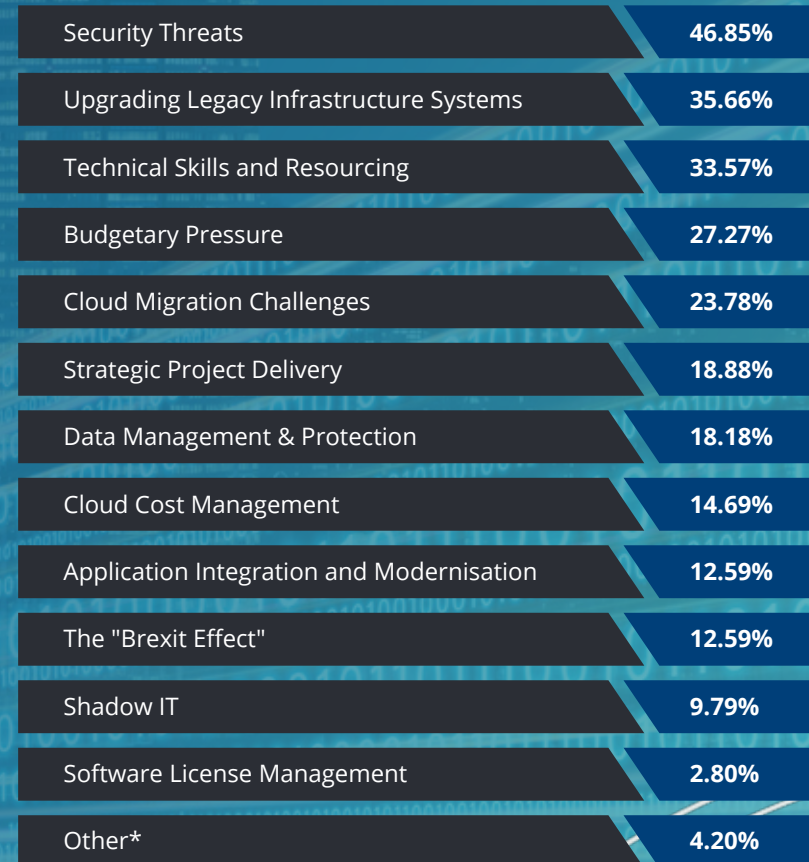


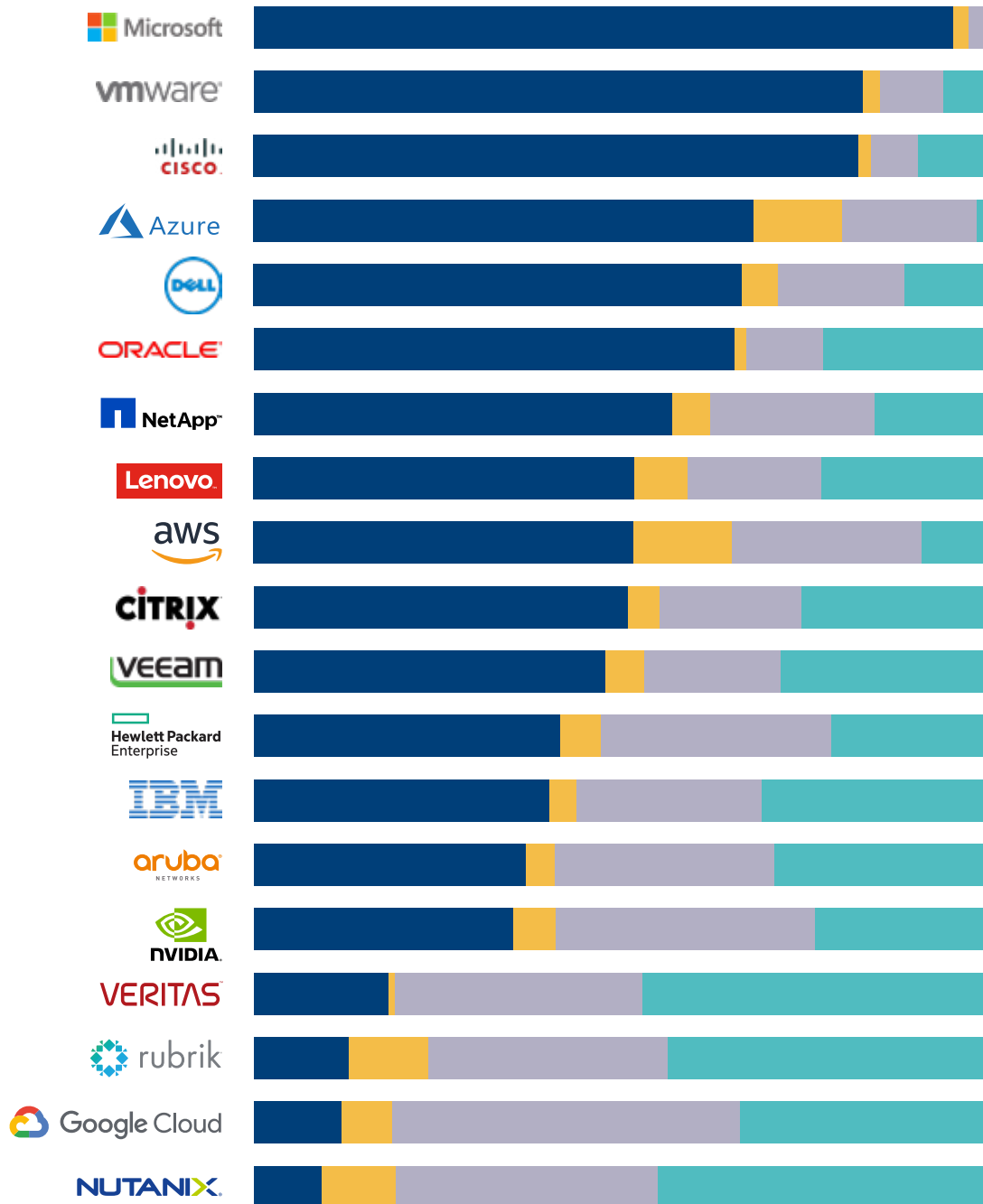
# Which **major challenges** are you most concerned about for 2021?

Not surprisingly security threats came out on top as a major challenge with 55% previously reporting cyber security as a primary focus. Additionally, upgrading legacy infrastructure systems remains a top 3 concern, with technical skills & resourcing.

As we adapt to changing market conditions, upgrading legacy systems creates a competitive advantage that enables organisations to thrive in the digital era. Constantly evolving technologies and software versions means it simply isn't viable to have experts in everything, and IT leaders are increasingly leveraging the technical skills of external IT specialists.

*Other: COVID-19 impact, user adoption.*





## How do the following **technology vendors** align with your IT strategy for 2021?

It's clear from the results that Microsoft, VMware and Cisco have a strong foothold in the market.

Interestingly, the dominant public cloud platform for those surveyed is Microsoft Azure Cloud, with 67% already utilising an Azure solution.

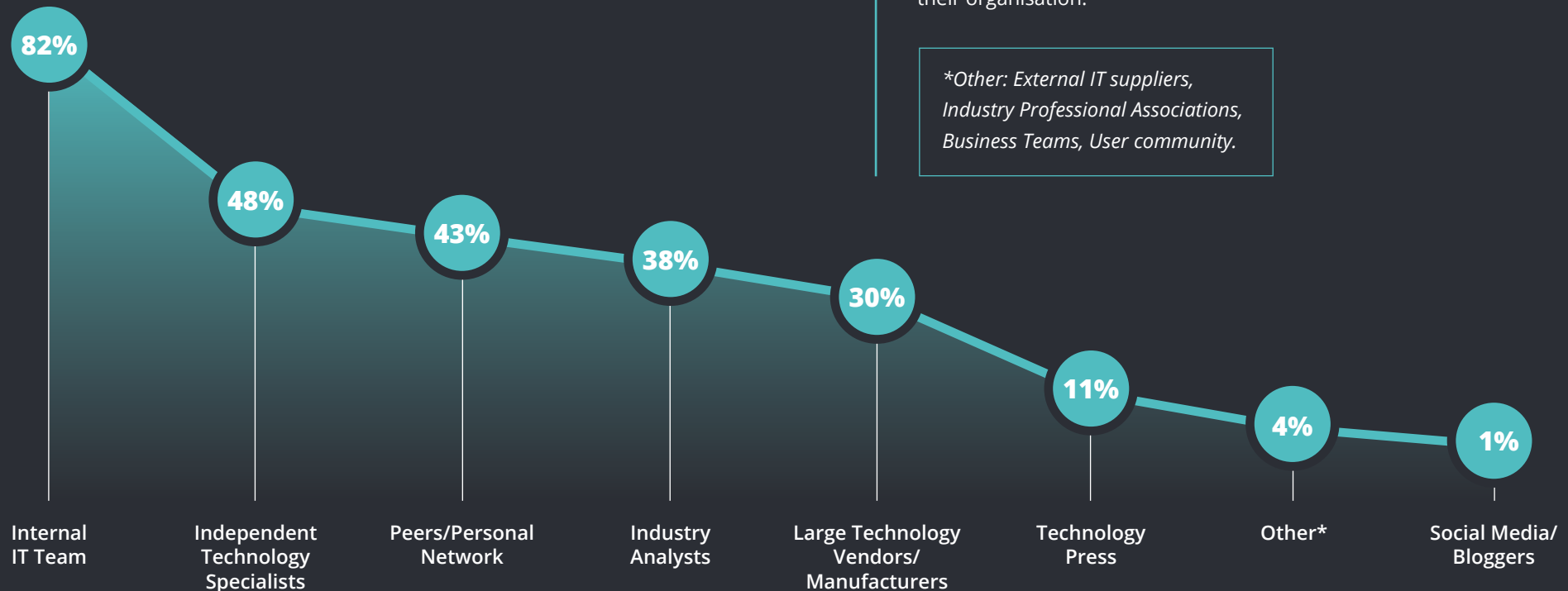
- Currently using
- Currently considering
- Would consider in future
- Would not consider



# Whose input is most valuable to you when making strategic **IT decisions** for your organisation?

As organisations consider new and emerging technologies, independent technology specialists have moved into second place as trusted advisors. This increasingly provides IT leaders with impartial advice as they look to avoid vendor bias and find the best-fit solution for their organisation.

*\*Other: External IT suppliers, Industry Professional Associations, Business Teams, User community.*



# Key takeaways

- ▶ Due to the evolution of the workplace, remote working is a strategic area of focus for the majority of respondents, with investment set to continue throughout 2021.
- ▶ Cyber security is a primary focus, as security and business leaders face the challenge of evolving cyberattacks and protecting critical assets.
- ▶ IT strategies continue to centre strongly on capturing the true value of the cloud, alongside protecting data and hybrid cloud environments.
- ▶ Organisations still operating under the same legacy systems are reporting challenges, as they look to upgrade to newer technology that is adaptable, resilient and future proof.
- ▶ As technology continues to develop rapidly, new skills and capabilities are required by IT departments to ensure innovation is being driven forward.
- ▶ IT management continues to drive technology change, with increased support and input from C-level executives.
- ▶ More than two-thirds of people surveyed are using Azure Cloud, with AWS increasing from 30% to 50%, supporting the popularity of cloud migration.







## How can Q help?

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It's clear from the results, that organisations are approaching the challenges surrounding digital transformation, their IT strategies and budgets in a variety of different ways in 2021.

At Q Associates, we work closely with our customers to fully understand their individual needs. Drawing on our independent knowledge, our goal is always to present the IT solutions and insights that best suit your unique requirements.

Contact us today if you have any questions or would like to discuss the benchmarking report's results in more detail.

For more information:

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