

## ESG SHOWCASE

# Dell Future-Proof—Reducing the Risk of IT

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**ABSTRACT:** Given the importance of digital services to business success, today's IT leaders must do everything possible to accelerate operations and simplify operational burdens on high-value personnel. To this end, the Dell Technologies Future-Proof Program provides a collection of offers, assurances, and guarantees designed to help companies simplify their IT operations. Future-Proof provides support during both acquisition and ongoing operation, enabling organizations to keep their data center equipment continuously modern.

## Overview

Currently, a majority of businesses are achieving success via their digital services and initiatives. Specifically, ESG research shows that 59% of IT decision makers say that data is their business, meaning they generate revenue directly from information-based products or services. ESG expects that percentage to increase to 81% in two years.<sup>1</sup>

What this means is that IT can no longer simply scale with the business. Revenue growth requires services to be already in place; therefore, IT must scale those digital services and operations ahead of the business if they want the business to be competitively viable. According to ESG research, 91% of surveyed IT organizations have had to accelerate their IT operations over the last three years, with 41% reporting that they have had to accelerate operations by 50% or more during that time frame.<sup>2</sup>

However, given the scale of modern IT, few, if any, organizations have sufficient IT personnel in place to meet the pace demanded by the rest of the business. Considering the multitude of tasks and responsibilities involved in traditional infrastructure management and maintenance, the gap between what IT organizations “need to do” and what they “can do” continues to widen.

Given the size and scale of this IT complexity/IT management challenge, more responsibility should fall on the IT vendor community to assume much of the risk and effort of validating infrastructure environments for customers. Dell Technologies, a leader in IT infrastructure solutions, knows this fact and has thus been developing its Future-Proof Program for years around the idea that it can assist in reducing risks and uncertainties associated with IT infrastructure acquisition and operations—ultimately helping its customers accelerate digital operations to fuel success.

## The Burden of Modern IT Operations

The role of IT today is complex, and that complexity is increasing. Nearly half of surveyed IT decision makers (46%) say IT has gotten more complex over just the last two years. This complexity is expected to continue to increase as IT environments scale. Almost every IT organization expects its data center infrastructure spending to either increase (47%) or

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<sup>1</sup> Source: ESG Research Report, [2021 Data Infrastructure Trends](#), September 2021.

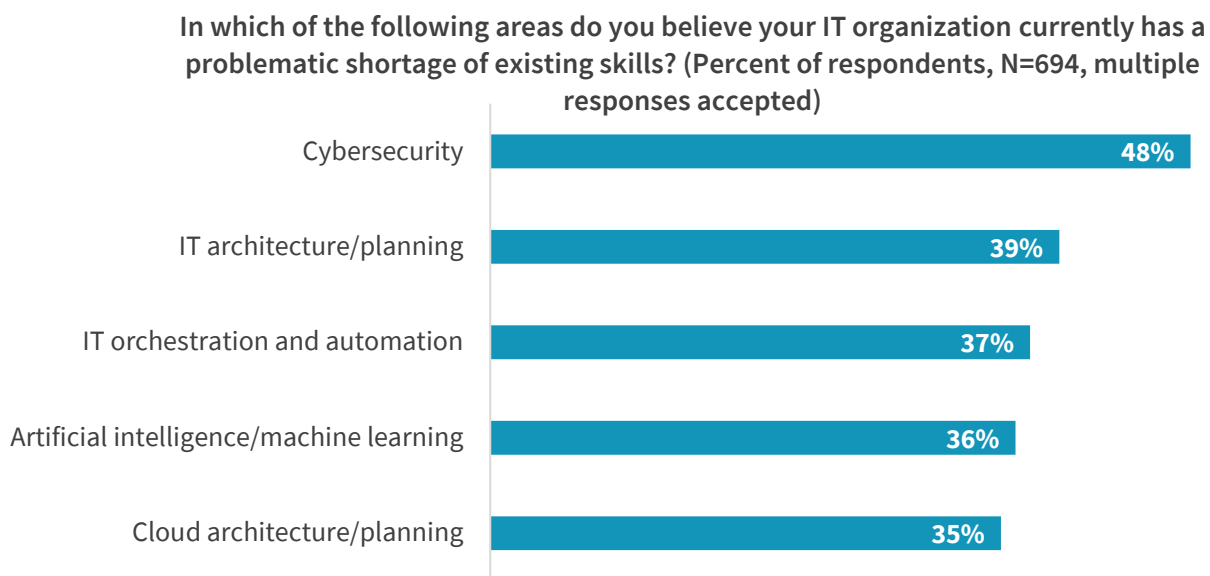
<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

remain at current rates (48%) for 2022.<sup>3</sup> In addition, the expected growth rate for on-premises storage capacity is expected to be 35% annually, on average.<sup>4</sup>

As on-premises IT spending and data volumes continue to increase, the sheer size and scale begins to limit (and ultimately handicap) operational efficiency and business opportunity. Nearly two-thirds (64%) of IT decision makers agree that the complexity of their IT infrastructure is slowing their IT operations and the progress of their digital initiatives.<sup>5</sup>

Additionally, there are simply not enough skilled personnel to manage everything. Ninety-two percent of IT decision makers report that their organizations are facing at least one problematic IT-related skills shortage (see Figure 1). Indeed, 76% of IT decision makers have taken on new responsibilities to support their organizations’ digital transformation goals or initiatives (or are under pressure to do so).<sup>6</sup> In other words, organizations cannot hire enough talented people to handle all the activities that their organization requires. And the personnel they do have on staff are continuously being burdened with additional tasks.

**Figure 1. Top Five Most Common Problematic Skill Shortages**



Source: ESG, a division of TechTarget, Inc.

### IT Organizations Must Demand More from Their IT Vendors

Given the extensive nature of current digital business demands, IT organizations must demand more from their IT vendors. In-house expertise is too scarce right now. The responsibility really should fall to the vendors to deliver that expertise to their customers. Therefore, when evaluating IT infrastructure providers, organizations should require that vendors deliver additional capabilities, tools, and services to assist the organization in two areas:

- 1. Reducing acquisition-related risk and uncertainty during new infrastructure deployments.** To accelerate initiatives and improve odds of success, vendors need to make purchasing from them less risky by offering easy return policies, payment flexibility, and programs to recycle outdated infrastructure elements.

<sup>3</sup> Source: ESG Research Report, [2022 Technology Spending Intentions Survey](#), November 2021.

<sup>4</sup> Source: ESG Survey Results, [2021 Data Infrastructure Trends](#), September 2021.

<sup>5</sup> Source: ESG Research Report, [2021 Data Infrastructure Trends](#), September 2021.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

2. **Reducing operation-related risk and uncertainty when managing and maintaining infrastructure.** To reduce burdens tied to ongoing activities, vendors need to make their products easier to manage, with simple automation, proactive alerts, ways to reduce data footprints, and the ability to upgrade and modernize easily.

## Dell Technologies Future-Proof Program

Dell understands that there is more to the IT purchasing, management, and maintenance process than just the hardware and software involved. Dell’s Future-Proof Program is designed to reduce the risks and burdens of buying and running that hardware and software. With Dell Technologies Future-Proof:

- Dell reduces the risk of IT asset acquisition, management, and retirement.
- Dell reduces the burden and risk involved with initial solution design, providing added protection if the system as designed does not meet specifications or pre-established data-reduction guarantees.
- Dell, via its CloudIQ software, helps to ensure its broad portfolio (encompassing storage, backup, servers, and networking products) remains in a state optimal for supporting the business.

Similarly, for companies architecting solutions, acquiring IT assets, and/or deploying new technology, Dell Technologies Future-Proof offers multiple services and benefits, including:

- **Reduced deployment risk**—Dell offers a three-year satisfaction guarantee permitting the return of storage products that do not meet specified claims. This guarantee minimizes uncertainties associated with IT purchasing. It can often take time to get new systems up and running in production. Notably, the three-year satisfaction guarantee is valid for far longer than the traditional 30-day timeframe, reflecting a strong support-centered commitment from Dell to its customers.
- **Reduced payment risk**—Dell offers a variety of payment options through Dell Financial Services, regardless of whether the organization prefers CapEx, OpEx, or APEX services. For example, Dell offers “pay-as-you-go” options, including traditional leasing and financing, while also offering a “pay-as-you-use” option via an elastic capacity model called APEX Flex on Demand (FoD). FoD allows Dell customers to only pay for a base committed capacity that they use, but it also provides a pre-installed buffer capacity available on-demand if needed. IT departments only pay for that buffer capacity when it is used.
- **Reduced cost and complexity when retiring legacy systems**—Following a valid storage purchase, Dell will recycle legacy storage at no extra charge through its Tech Refresh and Recycle program. Disposal of old systems is vital to reducing power, cooling, real estate, and maintenance expenses. Dell ensures that outdated gear is recycled at no additional charge. IT departments always face issues of data center sprawl and the costs that result from it. They don’t need the extra operational burden of retiring/disposing of legacy equipment across multiple, disparate global sites. It requires time and effort, with very little upside to the business. Dell’s Tech Refresh and Recycle program is available worldwide, and this is something all IT vendors should be doing. In-house IT personnel are too valuable for such tasks.

Lastly, to reduce the burden and risk of managing and maintaining existing solutions, Dell Technologies Future-Proof offers multiple services and benefits, including:

- **The ability to automate IT infrastructure management and deliver proactive alerts via Dell CloudIQ technology**—Dell CloudIQ software combines proactive monitoring, machine learning, and predictive analytics to improve visibility

through a single view across servers, storage, and networking—for both on-premises infrastructure and data protection in the cloud—along with the ability to create custom reports. CloudIQ also helps to reduce risk through proactive health notifications and predictive analytics that can quickly detect deviations, anomalies, and performance impacts to accelerate troubleshooting/resolution. Cloud IQ also offers capacity projections to help plan for future growth needs.

- **Optimized IT infrastructure costs**—Dell provides data-reduction benefits across storage and backup with guaranteed data reduction/deduplication rates. Specifically, Dell guarantees a 4:1 reduction ratio across its PowerStore and PowerMax 2500/8500 Open Systems platforms, with no pre-assessment required.<sup>7</sup> Dell also guarantees a deduplication compression ratio of at least 25:1 for its Data Protection Suite of software writing to PowerProtect DD target appliances and at least 55:1 for its PowerProtect DP integrated appliances.
- **A way to stay consistently modern with the latest technology via Dell’s Anytime Upgrade program**—Dell offers its PowerStore and PowerMax 2500 and 8500 storage customers the option to receive the latest performance and security updates with non-disruptive (data-in-place) controller upgrades. The PowerStore Anytime Upgrade program comes in two varieties—Anytime Upgrade Standard, which allows PowerStore customers to upgrade to a next-gen storage controller, and Anytime Upgrade Select, which allows customers to either upgrade their PowerStore model to the next generation plus the next-higher model of controller or receive an additional discount to scale out their PowerStore appliance. In addition, PowerMax 2500 and 8500 customers are eligible for Anytime Upgrade Standard to keep their infrastructure continuously modern.

## The Bigger Truth

Businesses run on data and digital services now. This reality means that an organization can only move as quickly as its scarce and highly skilled IT personnel can operate. Far too much time and effort is being wasted on low-value tasks such as making sure technology does what the vendor says it does, recycling old hardware, monitoring hardware in operation, staying up to date with the latest firmware, and isolating/fixing issues. Each one of those tasks is necessary for smooth business operation, but they do not generate revenue.

IT leaders need to demand that their IT vendors assist them with essential but low-value-add activities—those necessary evils. With its Future-Proof Program, Dell has compiled a series of offerings that can dramatically reduce the burden on personnel. IT departments can focus on the business, assured that Dell Technologies will support them throughout the IT lifecycle, across the whole portfolio, on a worldwide basis. As a result, those teams will have more time to focus on the valuable, rewarding, and lucrative aspects of their jobs.

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<sup>7</sup> Source: Dell Technologies, [Dell Technologies All-Flash Data Reduction Guarantee Terms and Conditions](#), May 2022.