

NOVEMBER 2023

Dell Future-Proof—Reducing the Risk of IT

Scott Sinclair, Practice Director

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, research from TechTarget's Enterprise Strategy Group shows that 59% of IT decision-makers say that data is their business, meaning they generate revenue directly from information-based products or services. Enterprise Strategy Group expects that percentage to increase to 81% in two years.¹

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 teams must scale those digital services and operations ahead of the business if they want the business to be competitively viable. According to Enterprise Strategy Group 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.²

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 and 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 and thus has 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. More than half of surveyed IT decision-makers (53%) say their organization's IT environment has gotten more complex over just the last two years. This complexity is expected to continue to increase as IT environments scale, with almost every IT organization expecting its data

¹ Source: Enterprise Strategy Group Research Report, [2021 Data Infrastructure Trends](#), November 2021.

² Ibid.

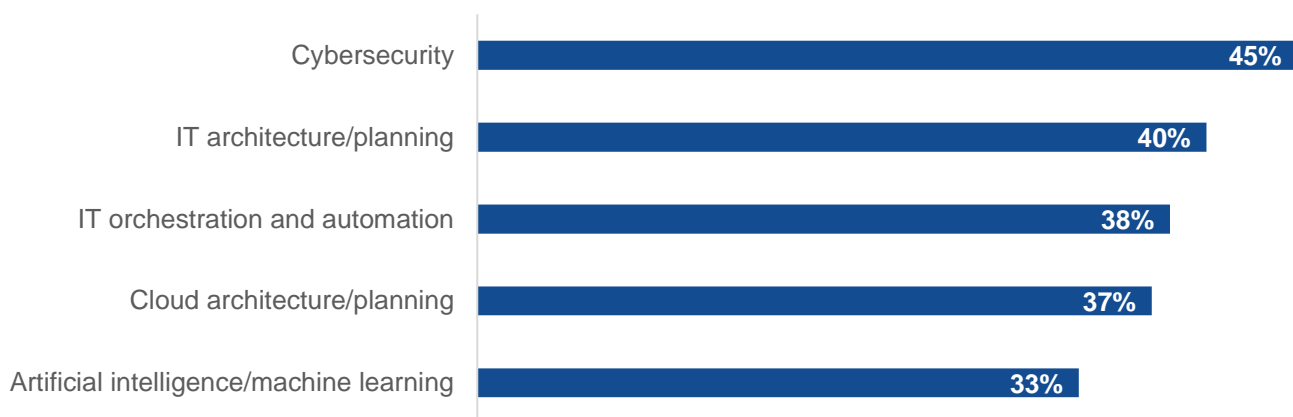
center infrastructure spending to either increase (50%) or remain at current rates (42%) for 2023.³ In addition, the expected growth rate for on-premises storage capacity is expected to be 35% annually, on average.⁴

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.⁵

Additionally, there are simply not enough skilled personnel to manage everything. Ninety-six percent of IT decision-makers report that their organizations are facing at least one problematic IT-related skills shortage (see Figure 1 for the top areas for talent shortages).⁶ 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).⁷ 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

In which of the following areas do you believe your IT organization currently has a problematic shortage of existing skills? (Percent of respondents, N=738, multiple responses accepted)



Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, 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 less risky by offering easy return policies, payment flexibility, and programs to recycle outdated infrastructure elements.

³ Source: Enterprise Strategy Group Complete Survey Results, [2023 Technology Spending Intentions Survey](#), November 2022.

⁴ Source: Enterprise Strategy Group Survey Results, [2021 Data Infrastructure Trends](#), September 2021.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Source: Enterprise Strategy Group Complete Survey Results, [2023 Technology Spending Intentions Survey](#), November 2022.

⁷ 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 AIOps software as a service, helps to ensure its broad portfolio (encompassing storage, data protection, server, hyperconverged, and networking products) remains in an optimal state 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 enables Dell customers to pay only for a base committed capacity that they use, but it also provides a pre-installed buffer capacity available on-demand if needed. IT departments pay for that buffer capacity only when it is used.
- **Reduced cost and complexity when retiring legacy systems.** Following a valid storage or server purchase, Dell will recycle legacy storage or servers 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 in nearly every country, 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 accelerate IT infrastructure management and proactively resolve issues via Dell CloudIQ technology.** Dell CloudIQ AIOps software combines proactive monitoring, machine learning, and predictive analytics to improve observability and remediation through a single view across server, storage, data protection, hyperconverged, and networking systems—for both on-premises Dell infrastructure and Dell primary storage and data protection services in public clouds—along with the ability to schedule custom reports. CloudIQ also helps to reduce risk through proactive health notifications and predictive analytics that can quickly detect performance and capacity anomalies and probable root causes to accelerate troubleshooting and resolution. In addition, Cloud IQ offers cybersecurity monitoring and energy and emissions monitoring and projections to help

plan for future growth needs. An API enables notifications and data to trigger workflows in other IT services management, incident management, and automation tools.

- **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 for PowerStore, 5:1 for its PowerMax 2500/8500 Open Systems platforms and 3:1 for PowerMax 2500/8500 Mainframe storage, with no pre-assessment required.⁸ Dell also guarantees a data protection deduplication compression ratio of at least 55:1 when using PowerProtect Data Manager software writing to on-premises PowerProtect DD target appliances or when using PowerProtect Data Manager Appliance. For Avamar or NetWorker software writing to PowerProtect DD target appliances, the minimum ratio is 25:1.
- **Continuously modern technology via Dell's Anytime Upgrade Program.** Dell offers its PowerStore customers the option to receive the latest performance, feature, and security updates nondisruptively. In addition to ongoing software innovation delivered at no extra cost, the Anytime Upgrade Program lets customers upgrade their current PowerStore appliance to a higher model, expand their scale-out cluster with a discount on a second appliance, or get tomorrow's technology with a next-gen appliance covered by the program.

Conclusion

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 and 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.

⁸ Source: Dell Technologies, [Dell Technologies All-Flash Data Reduction Guarantee Terms and Conditions](#), October 2023.

©TechTarget, Inc. or its subsidiaries. All rights reserved. TechTarget, and the TechTarget logo, are trademarks or registered trademarks of TechTarget, Inc. and are registered in jurisdictions worldwide. Other product and service names and logos, including for BrightTALK, Xtelligent, and the Enterprise Strategy Group might be trademarks of TechTarget or its subsidiaries. All other trademarks, logos and brand names are the property of their respective owners.

Information contained in this publication has been obtained by sources TechTarget considers to be reliable but is not warranted by TechTarget. This publication may contain opinions of TechTarget, which are subject to change. This publication may include forecasts, projections, and other predictive statements that represent TechTarget's assumptions and expectations in light of currently available information. These forecasts are based on industry trends and involve variables and uncertainties. Consequently, TechTarget makes no warranty as to the accuracy of specific forecasts, projections or predictive statements contained herein.

Any reproduction or redistribution of this publication, in whole or in part, whether in hard-copy format, electronically, or otherwise to persons not authorized to receive it, without the express consent of TechTarget, is in violation of U.S. copyright law and will be subject to an action for civil damages and, if applicable, criminal prosecution. Should you have any questions, please contact Client Relations at cr@esg-global.com.

About Enterprise Strategy Group

TechTarget's Enterprise Strategy Group provides focused and actionable market intelligence, demand-side research, analyst advisory services, GTM strategy guidance, solution validations, and custom content supporting enterprise technology buying and selling.

✉ contact@esg-global.com

🌐 www.esg-global.com