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Innovator, Firefighter, or Ghost? Cisco Global Survey Reveals Insight into IT's Impact on the Business

International Report Assesses Effectiveness of IT Leaders to Align Network Strategy with Business Initiatives; Survey Also Assesses IT's Adoption of Latest Industry Trends

SAN JOSE, Calif. – May 8, 2013 – As businesses increase the number of new application rollouts and create new connected user experiences to better serve their customers, IT organizations face the challenge of expanding network services and aligning their network strategies to meet the requirements of the business. A global study announced today by Cisco revealed that while the majority (63 percent) of IT professionals are confident in their ability to respond to the needs of the business, almost a third (27 percent) still equated the visibility of their IT department into their company's business initiatives to a foggy day in London.

The 2013 Cisco Global IT Impact Survey provides insight into IT's role as a business enabler, assesses the extent by which network investments are keeping pace with the demands of the business, and looks into IT's likelihood to adopt new technologies that can increase IT business impact.

The top research findings reveal:

- Applications and user expectations are becoming more complex: almost three-fourths of IT participants (71 percent) reported that IT is deploying more applications today than one year ago.
- IT and the network are increasingly recognized as enabling the business: a higher percentage (78 percent) stated the network is more critical for delivering applications than it was at this time last year.
- IT-business alignment is improving, but IT is not always involved when the decisions are made: nearly nine out of 10 (89 percent) IT leaders collaborate with line of business leaders at least on a monthly basis, indicating a mutual business understanding of the critical and growing role of the network for application delivery. However, more than one-third (38 percent) of IT professionals surveyed said they are brought into the planning and deployment process late.

Among other findings, the Cisco Global IT Impact Survey also provided insight into IT sentiment toward emerging trends such as Software Defined Networking (SDN) and the Internet of Things. Results showed that one-third (34 percent) say they've seen an actual SDN deployment as often as they've seen Bigfoot, Elvis, or the Loch Ness Monster, while less than half (42 percent) claim to be vaguely familiar with the Internet of Things.

Detailed Findings

Increasing Alignment between IT and Business Leaders, But More Work Is Needed



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- When asked to compare the visibility of IT within their organization, 36 percent said “innovator” was the best description of how business leaders viewed their role. Additionally, 34 percent claimed “orchestrator” was the best fit, 15 percent chose “firefighter,” 7 percent said “ghost,” and 7 percent selected “fortune teller.”
- Although survey data indicates the majority of IT leaders feel they are closely aligned with business practices, business applications are still being deployed without their knowledge. More than three-quarters (76 percent) of IT said business leaders and other non-IT teams roll out new applications without engaging IT either “all the time” or “sometimes.”
- Furthermore, more than one-third (38 percent) of IT professionals surveyed claim they are brought into the planning and deployment process either “during the rollout process” or “the day before rollout.” This data indicates that when businesses move ahead with new initiatives without first consulting IT, the network may be challenged with handling the new applications.
- IT leaders were asked to describe their attitudes toward asking business decision makers for budget toward network infrastructure upgrades. 18 percent said they would rather “break out of prison or train for a triathlon” than ask for additional budget.
- When asked how they know if they’re doing a good job, one-quarter (26 percent) said “nobody calls us.” Nearly another quarter (23 percent) chose “I sleep at home instead of the office.”

Industry’s New Business Opportunities Challenge Network Readiness

- Even with the business understanding of the growing role of the network for application delivery, 82 percent of respondents acknowledged that user experience with standard business applications is affected by network performance, even in basic applications such as Web, file services and email.
- When asked about the leading causes responsible for slowing down a new application rollout over the past year, most cited budget (34 percent), while 26 percent of respondents claimed data center infrastructure readiness, cloud readiness and network limitations such as bandwidth. One-quarter (25 percent) cited “general procrastination” as the leading cause.
- 71 percent are planning to deploy SDN solutions in the next 12 months. The main reasons? One-third (33 percent) cite cost savings, while another third (33 percent) said fast scalability of infrastructure.
- Almost three quarters (71 percent) report IT is deploying more applications than a year ago, but 41 percent claimed their networks were not ready to support “bring your own device” (BYOD) policies, while 38 percent said they were not ready to support cloud deployments.
- When asked to gauge their readiness for Internet of Things applications and deployments, nearly half (48 percent) believe it will open up new business opportunities.
- Survey participants ranked cloud readiness (29 percent) as the most important network initiative to their business in the upcoming year, followed by “converging IT technology and operations technology” (28 percent) and “data center consolidation/virtualization” (27 percent).
- When asked to rank the most difficult IT initiative over the past year, moving applications to the cloud (40 percent) ranked first, with data center virtualization ranking second (38 percent). This data aligns with the [2012 Cisco® Global Cloud Networking Survey](#), which found that some IT



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professionals would rather get a root canal, dig a ditch, or do their own taxes than address network challenges associated with cloud deployments.

- Also consistent with the results of the 2012 Cisco Global Cloud Networking Survey was security being selected as the No. 1 roadblock to a successful implementation of cloud services or mobility, as 80 percent cited it as a challenge.

Supporting Quotes

“More than ever, IT has the potential to make a profound impact on the business – and opportunity to act as a strategic partner – by building a network architecture that can leverage multiple technology transitions,” said Rob Soderbery, senior vice president and general manager, Cisco Enterprise Networking Group. “The most successful IT professionals are those who acknowledge that fast decision-making within the enterprise is directly tied to the readiness of the network.”

Overview

- The Cisco Global IT Impact Survey, which included participation from more than 1,300 IT decision makers in 13 countries, was commissioned to measure the impact of IT professionals on the decisions that shape their businesses, as well as measure the relevance of the network to the business.
- The survey was commissioned by Cisco and distributed by Insight Express with the goal of helping business leaders and IT organizations to better understand the challenges related to enabling new innovative smart business processes.
- The countries that participated in the survey were: Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States.
- The complete findings are available at www.cisco.com/go/impactsurvey

Public Announcement of Survey Results at Interop Las Vegas

The results of the survey will be announced today at Interop Las Vegas 2013 during Rob Soderbery’s keynote at 8:30 a.m. PDT. In his keynote, which can be viewed online at www.interop.com/live, Soderbery, Cisco SVP & GM, Enterprise Networking Group, will demonstrate how the network enables this business transformation by connecting the unconnected and better connecting the connected, by being more intelligent, context-aware, open, programmable and agile. Soderbery will also show examples of how IT can support more aspects of the business by using the network as a platform for the Internet of Everything, providing the groundwork for IT and business leaders to discover opportunities they never thought possible.

Supporting Resources

- Read more on the [Cisco Global IT Impact Survey](#)
- Read more on the [Cisco Global Cloud Networking Survey](#), announced at Interop Las Vegas 2012
- Read more on the [Cisco Global Work Your Way Study](#), announced at Cisco Live London 2013
- Visit Cisco [Borderless Networks](#) website
- Follow [Cisco Enterprise](#) and [Cisco Mobility](#) on Twitter
- Cisco’s view of the “[Internet of Everything](#)”
- [Cisco’s Open Network Environment](#)
- [Cisco Application Experience](#)



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