

2020 Infrastructure Priorities Report

Doing infrastructure well means doing it differently.

Sample

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Executive Summary

Infrastructure

IT people are busy. According to Info-Tech's IT Staffing Assessment diagnostic program, IT professionals spend most of their time maintaining and administering existing systems — important work, but not valuable in the same way as project work can be.

There is always more to do, and if IT leaders are to grow with the business, provide meaningful value, and ascend the ladder to true business partner and innovator status, aggressive prioritization becomes necessary.

This priority report highlights how hundreds of different organizations have approached this challenge, what they've chosen to prioritize, and some common themes and implications.

Infrastructure leaders are uniquely positioned to enable value up and down the stack. As the transition towards cloud services continues and infrastructure roles evolve to meet new business requirements, a change in skills, mindset, and technology deployed will become crucial to organizational success.

Ultimately, understanding how changes in technology and patterns of work stand to impact the day-to-day lives of IT staff across seniority and industries will allow you to evaluate what your priorities should be for 2020. Ensure that you're spending your time right. Use data to validate. Prioritize and implement.

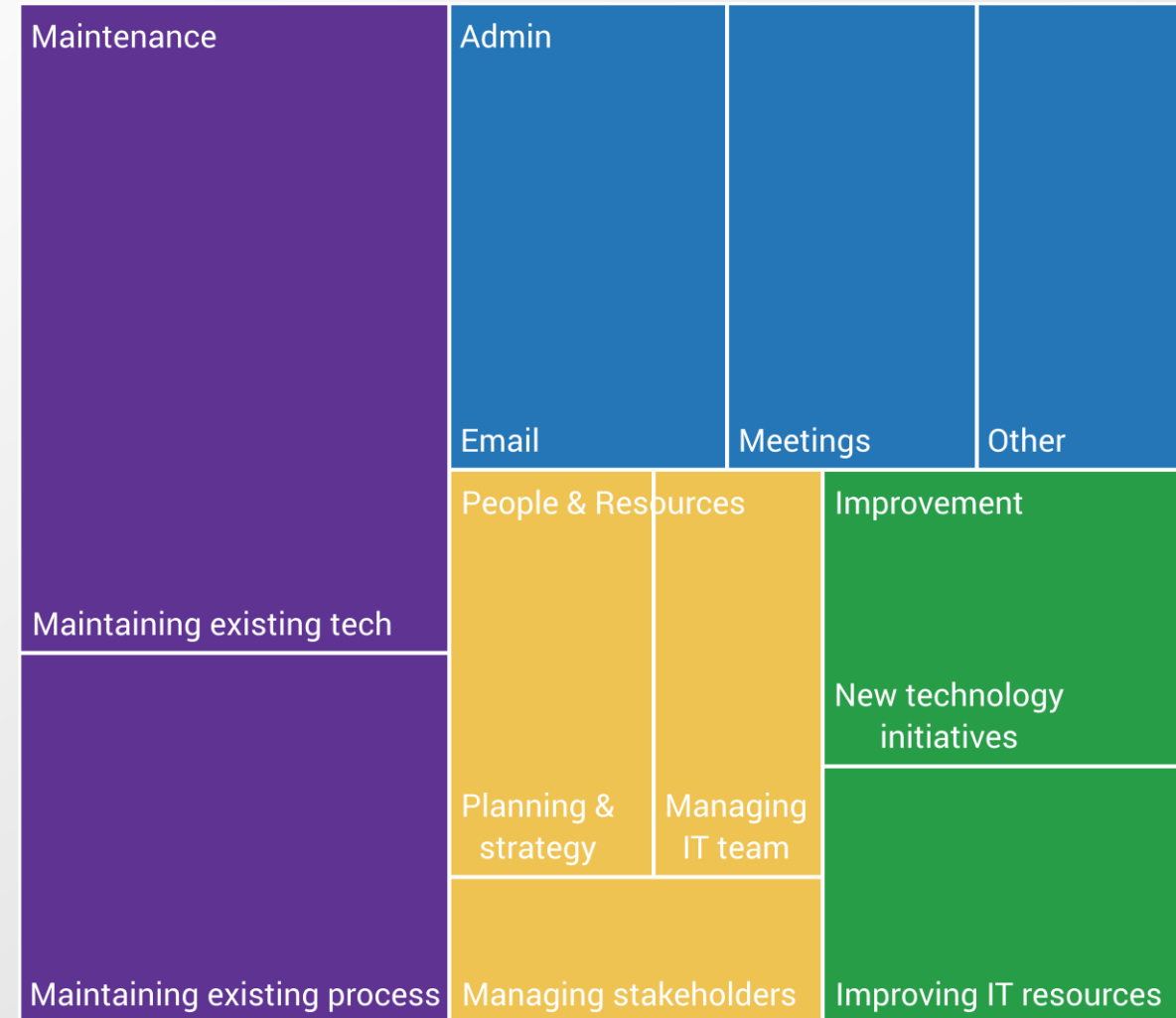
IT people are busy

Maintenance and admin dominate time spent

- According to **Info-Tech's Staffing Assessment** more than **50% of IT time** is devoted to administration and maintaining existing technology and processes. This is important work, but it will not on its own move IT to business partner status.
- Almost **60% of respondents** believe that their infrastructure can be run more efficiently through eliminating wasteful or low-value activities.
- With so little time available for new technology initiatives and improving IT resources, ensure that those initiatives that do make it out of the gate are important, valuable, and timely.
- Reducing administrative and maintenance work will drive business value and improve employee satisfaction – higher-value work also tends to be more engaging and fulfilling.

IT time allocation

■ Admin ■ Maintenance ■ People & Resources ■ Improvement



What is a priority?

It's important to know!

Everyone knows what a “priority” is in the strictest sense. When it comes to IT, it's fair to think of a priority as a project or initiative that is more important than — and therefore takes precedence over — others. For the purposes of this report, foundational activities, like keeping the lights on, while important, are table stakes — not priorities. A priority has two key characteristics:

- Importance: the project must be slotted for work in calendar year 2020
- Newness: it must be a new initiative or significant revision to an existing platform or service

Revised definition:

A priority is a distinct initiative that is more important than all or most others and reflects or inspires an important change in the way we do IT.

Others' priorities shouldn't dictate what you work on in 2020. They do provide context, however, and important information about how changes in the market drive changes in the day-to-day business of IT.

Methodology

The questions we ask impact the answers we get

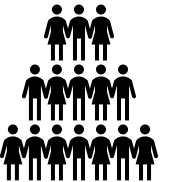
Qualitative + secondary

We started with a long-listing exercise. What trends did other research organizations and our members identify as important to them over the past few years? Our goal was to determine if trends have transitioned into priorities.



Large-n survey

To evaluate priorities, we used a large-n survey. 460 respondents answered questions about their priorities, organizations, and personal characteristics. We used this data to determine what IT professionals are focused on.



Qualitative drill down

We used the survey to winnow the list of priorities. We then conducted additional qualitative research to understand how our respondents may have selected the responses they did. Further secondary research and insight rounded out the project.



Five Priorities

Survey says...

Internet of Things

Smart devices, ranging from intelligent microwaves to autonomous robots for manufacturing, have left the realm of speculation and permeated businesses small and large. Cloud providers have enabled the transition by offering IoT toolsets, and IT professionals are busy preparing their environment to create value with non-traditional computers.

Network Modernization

As the nature of service delivery changes to rely more on the internet, and as software eats the networking world, network modernization is a crucial project. Redesigning networks to account for the predominance of the client-cloud relationship, implementing new technology like SDN, and exploring standards like 5G are all key 2020 IT priorities.

Automation for Infrastructure and Operations

Any IT shop with a view to the future is exploring automation – and infrastructure and operations offers ample opportunity to reduce rote, manual work. Powered by cloud infrastructure services that natively embrace automation, the promise of “infrastructure-as-code” is more real in 2020 than it’s ever been.

Backup and Data Protection

Doing IT differently means doing backup differently. Organizations are struggling with how the transition from traditional backup to “data protection” and the migration to cloud services changes the opportunities and responsibilities available to them.

Multi-Cloud

Every vendor has a cloud. Like potato chips, you can’t eat just one. Organizations are forced to the multi-cloud by the narrowing of on-premises options, but many are using the opportunity to explore how multi-cloud deployments can give them an advantage.

Internet of Things

The long-trending technology is finally ready for primetime.

Network Modernization

A modern network will unlock the value of the cloud.



Automation for Infrastructure & Operations

Don't waste your time. Do important
work.

Backup and Data Protection

Backup and data protection aren't the same thing. That's important.



Multi-Cloud

A single cloud provider is *so* 2010.