



VansonBourne

PRODUCTIVITY

Influence and involvement:

How IT strategies are being developed



Most IT departments report that their IT strategy is heavily influenced by the wider organisation – aligning with its goals, and influenced by key stakeholders.

Our research shows that IT strategies are increasingly fluid and adaptable, and that the days of formalised and rigid IT blueprints are over. Further, stakeholders across the business are playing an expanded role in supporting the development of the IT strategy – reflecting the ever-increasing importance and integration of information technology to modern organisations. Significant events such as the pandemic, geopolitical tensions, and global recessions serve only to underline the need for flexibility and robustness in the IT systems and processes in order that they can cope with the unexpected and support business continuity.

A recent [McKinsey](#) article emphasises the need for a dynamic strategy that renews as new challenges happen or opportunities arise. According to [Gartner](#), *“Organisations may find that their strategy is out-of-date as soon as it is published... CIOs and other IT leaders need a new approach, one that enables them to adapt to changes as they happen without being overly reactive.”*

In this third edition of our ProductivITy series, we’re examining the strategic side of IT. We found that just 31% of IT decision makers report having a formal documented strategy, with a range of approaches taken instead. 31% have a comprehensive but informal collection of plans and objectives, 18% a collection of different initiatives while 19% admit to not having an overarching/well defined strategy at all but rather react to issues as they occur.

So, what influences the ways in which IT strategies are currently developed and managed?

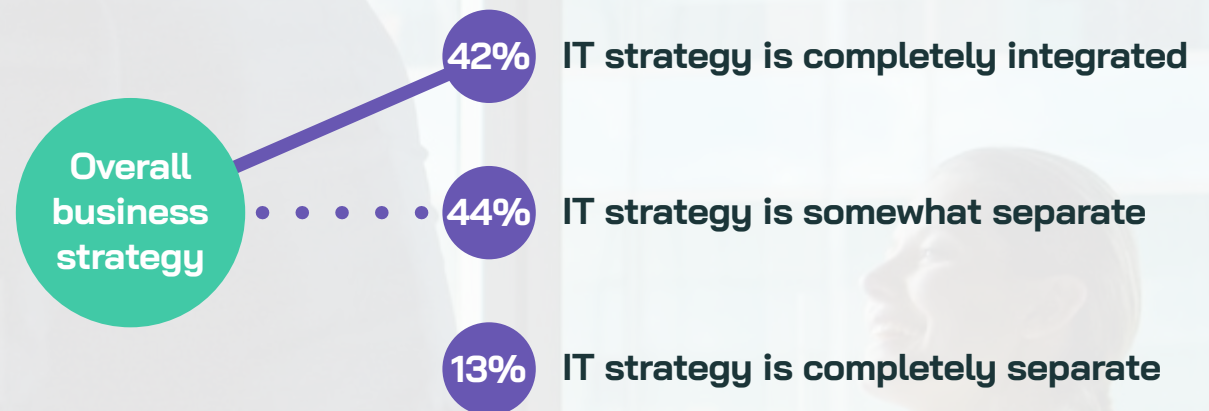
IT and business strategies have common goals



We look at the overall strategy, which is more business based, and then that feeds down into the various IT architecture groups as well. We will then look to ways of implementing that strategy. It all goes hand in hand.

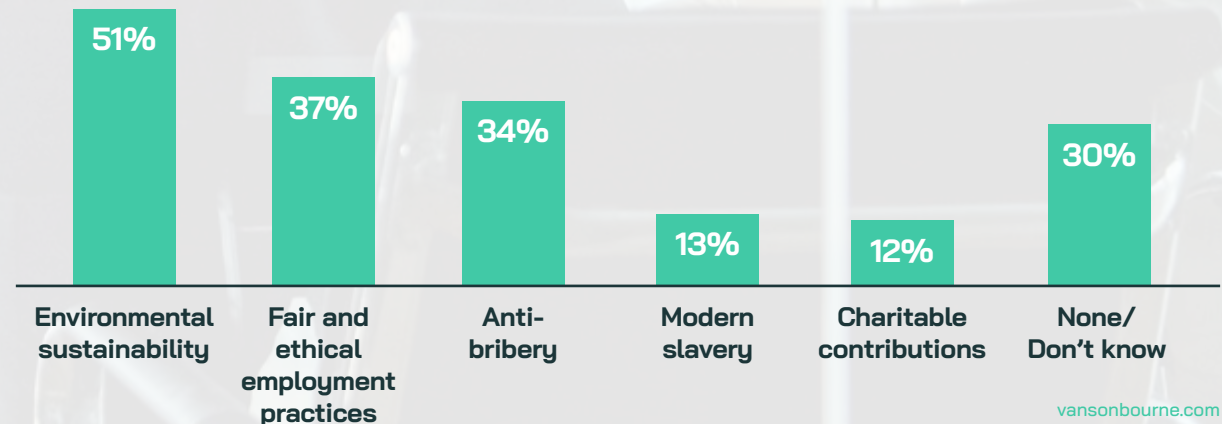
Advisory Systems Engineer in the IT sector

The majority (86%) report their organisations' current IT strategy being at least somewhat integrated with their overall business strategy, demonstrating the extent to which each influences the other.



Furthermore, 70% of respondents report their organisation having Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policies in place which impact their organisations' IT strategy, demonstrating the cohesive relationship between IT and the wider business.

CSR policies in place that are impacting IT strategy



It's not just IT employees involved in IT strategy development

While senior IT personnel such as Heads of IT, CTOs, CIOs, etc., are likely to be involved in IT strategy development (78%), more than half (54%) report involvement of senior representatives from around the organisation who are not in IT. A similar proportion (53%) also mention board-level representatives such as the CEO, CFO, COO, etc. as being involved too.



With the need for IT strategies to align with the wider business ones, it makes sense for multiple stakeholders from across the organisation to be involved. A recent article in the [Harvard Business Review](#) uncovers the importance of involving the wider organisation in the strategy development process to come up with ideas and allow solutions to emerge.

There are several influences when developing an IT strategy

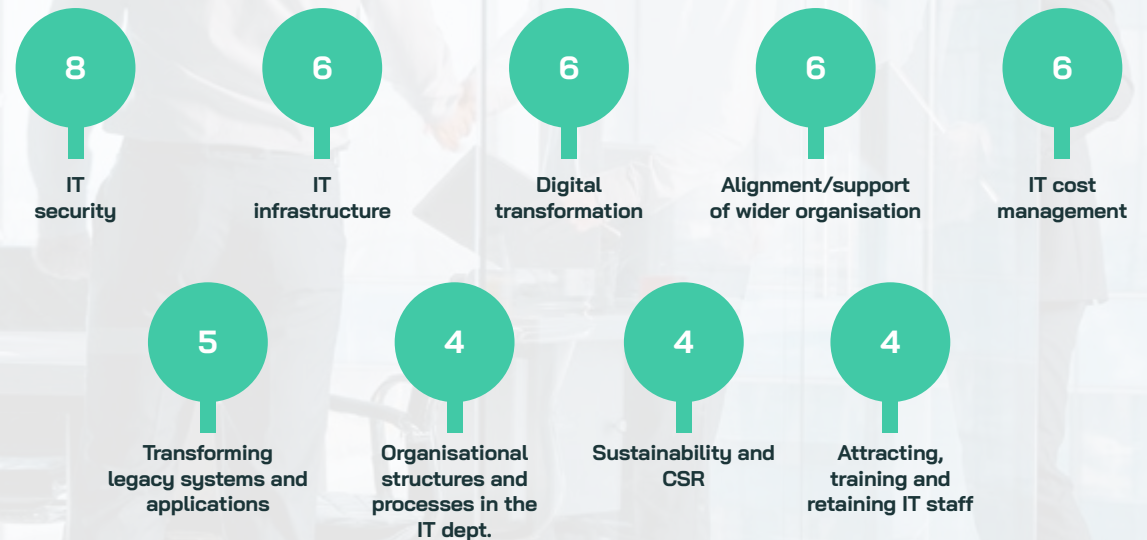


The main pillar of our IT strategy comprises of zero trust security, meaning that we want to provide very stable operations. Incidents happen, but we need to make sure they there is no business impact ...and security is absolutely something we know cannot be compromised.


Head of Infrastructure and Information Security in the IT security sector

IT security is key, with a reported average of 8 out of 10 in terms of level of importance. In an ever-growing technological world, it's no surprise that IT security has the greatest influence on the development of IT strategies themselves, as security vulnerabilities would only further permeate through the business.

Importance of the below in developing IT strategies
(Average score out of 10, where 10 means very important and 0 means not important at all)



With the evident need for agility and flexibility, as well as contributions from the wider business when developing an IT strategy, it makes sense that security is of importance. Not only this, but the infrastructure itself, digital transformation, and alignment with the wider organisation are also factors rated as important. IT vendors should always be mindful of this – in both their engagements and their communications – and the fact that their products are evaluated more widely than just by the IT department.



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COMMUNITY

The network for technology insight

These survey findings are based on qualitative and quantitative interviews with 213 members of the Vanson Bourne Community, our insight network of IT and business professionals at the forefront of their industries. We regularly engage with our members to tap into their expertise and perspectives on the latest technology-driven trends facing their organisations today.

Whether you're looking for deeper market understanding or data to drive your strategy, insights from our expert community can help inform your thinking and test your hypotheses.

Our Productivity database and insight series harnesses Community insights to take a forensic look into the IT department, investigating the issues faced by tech teams in ever-changing times. You've just read the latest in our ongoing series, exploring the strategy issues in tech today.

Get in touch to learn more about these findings or to discover how the insights in our Productivity database can support your goals today:

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