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PRODUCTIV**ITY**

Sustainability shapes strategy ...but how successfully?

Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) are key considerations influencing IT strategies and vendor selection too.

Organisations demonstrate focus on environmental sustainability, fair and ethical employment practices, and anti-bribery amongst other areas relating to CSR. Having formal policies in place across these areas is promising – clearly organisations see the value behind ensuring they have the appropriate parameters in place to ensure they're following sustainable and responsible protocols.

Such policies and practices further influence decisions when it comes to IT vendor selection and IT strategies themselves which demonstrates the important relationship between sustainability, CSR, and IT.

According to [McKinsey](#), *"Sustainability has long been on the agenda at many companies, but for decades their environmental, social, and governance activities have been disconnected from core strategy."*

In this third edition of our ProductivITy series, we're examining the strategic side of IT across three articles. So far we've looked at the [main factors influencing strategy development](#) and then how [IT budgets are being impacted](#). In this article, we asked decision makers about how their organisations are creating an impactful, sustainable and responsible future.

Keep reading to discover their perspectives.

Sustainability and CSR are influential to the business

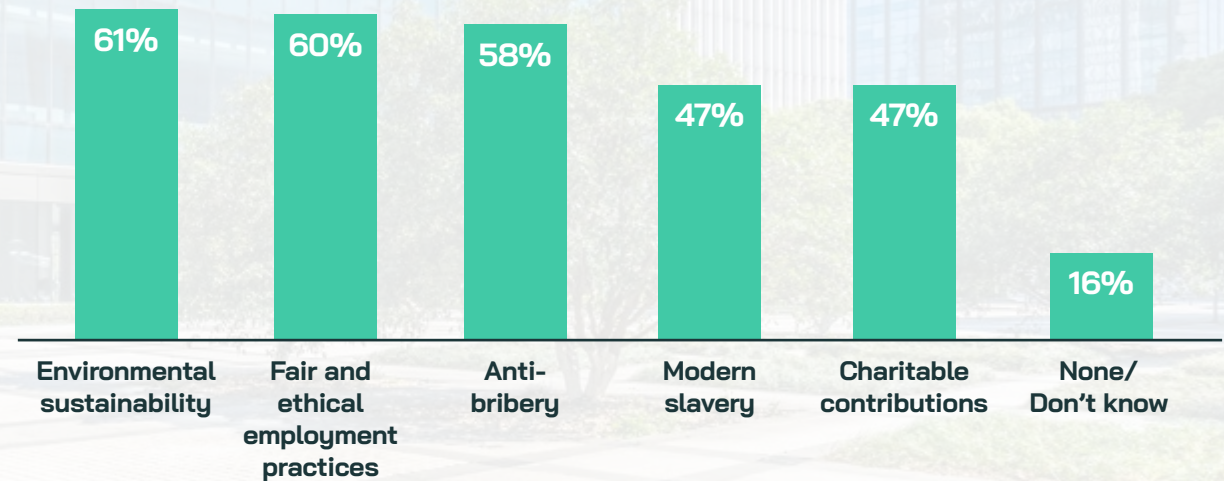


We are investing a lot in not only sustainable data centres, power, and renewable energy, but we are also looking at other areas such as encouraging our customers to use electronic means rather than paper.

Head of Infrastructure and Information Security in the IT security sector

The majority (84%) of respondents surveyed report that their organisation has formal policies in place relating to sustainability or CSR. These are predominately in the context of environmental sustainability (61%), fair and ethical employment practices (60%), and anti-bribery policies (58%).

Formal CSR policies in place

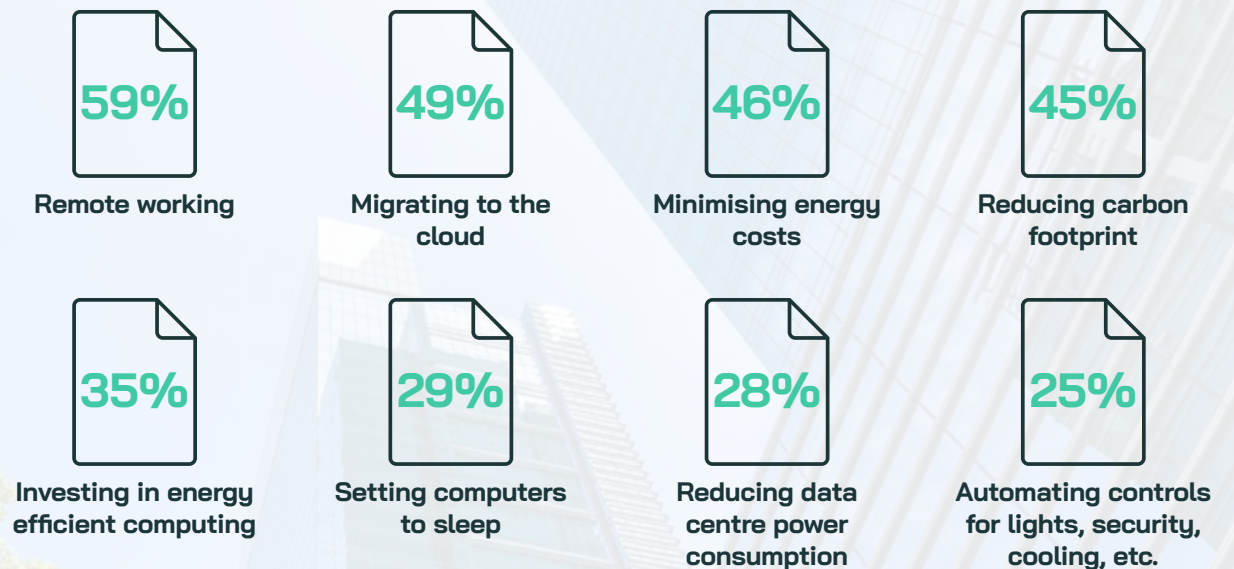


Thinking about policies in place, these tend to impact organisations' IT vendor selection too. Environmental sustainability (43%), fair and ethical employment practices (42%), and anti-bribery (40%), again, come out as the three core areas where this is the case. With organisations striving to follow more sustainable, fair, and ethical practices, it goes without saying that the IT vendors they choose are going to further influence those goals and the success of such goals.

Areas that are incorporated into IT strategies or IT vendor selection criteria relate to recent events

When thinking solely about environmental sustainability practices, remote working (59%), migrating to the cloud (49%), minimising energy costs (46%), and reducing carbon footprints (45%) were key areas incorporated into their organisations' IT strategy or vendor selection criteria.


CSR practices incorporated into IT strategy or vendor selection



Given the sudden, forced conditions in terms of remote working as a result of the pandemic, it makes sense that this is the most likely sustainability-related practice incorporated into IT strategies too. IT teams will have had to respond quickly to sudden changes such as these, which have changed the landscape of working quite considerably. Migrating to the cloud will have also been impacted by this, with organisations experiencing shifts away from physical premises.




Creating an impactful, sustainable, and responsible future



The research has highlighted that sustainability and CSR are important to organisations, and they're elements which they're clearly thinking about an incorporating into their day to day. Importantly, this has also trickled into IT, where they will have had to dedicate time and resource to working from home conditions, migrating infrastructure to the cloud, and minimising energy costs.

However, when asked, respondents only scored an average of 4.8 out of 10 when it comes to the effectiveness behind their IT strategies in delivering sustainably and with CSR in mind – so there's ample opportunity to improve here. Organisations that fail to address this, whilst have the best intentions in mind in terms of becoming more sustainable and ethically responsible, may fall short in terms of delivering positive change.



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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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