# Latest IT Trends

## Mapping the Future of IT and Operations in 2022

**Fueling Information Technology Forward in a Post-Pandemic Era**

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# Introduction

When the 1918 flu pandemic swept across the world a century ago, the biggest technology at the time, the telephone, was unable to keep up. As calls increased with social distancing, skilled operators decreased in numbers, many of them out sick with no one to replace them. Companies imposed cutbacks, asking customers to limit calls. It would take decades after the epidemic waned for the telephone to undergo a transformation that could withstand turbulent times.

Like the 1918 pandemic, the cataclysmic shifts that the COVID-19 pandemic has left in its wake changed everything. But this time, tech has stepped up to the plate as a revolutionary force. For business and organizations, digital transformation accelerated at an unforeseen pace, disrupting both bottom lines and the path taken to guarantee its growth.

The COVID-19 crisis upended outdated methods, forced the adoption of robust technologies, and reshaped how the workforce stayed connected during an unprecedented era of social distancing. Searches for "contactless" and "essential business" dramatically increased at the height of the pandemic as businesses transitioned to a new way of doing things for employees and customers that prioritized health and safety.

**IT and Operations teams were one of the most dramatically impacted sectors and became perhaps the most crucial element of leading businesses through the choppy waves of 2020 to calmer shores.** But despite their vital contributions in making business better, these teams faced their own set of challenges.

Frequently under pressure and understaffed, IT and operations staff had to quickly adapt to changes within the business, and they didn't always get the budget or credit they deserved in order to operate efficiently. In the higher education sector for example, IT budgets suffered from cuts, with 65% of colleges and universities affected.[1] Then, there was the ongoing skills shortage, with **more than one million open IT positions[2] in the US alone in late 2019.**

## 65% of colleges & universities were affected by post-pandemic budget cuts

Operation teams have also dealt with ongoing challenges, too. The sheer volume of transformation has created financial and operational risk, leaving companies grappling with inflation, capacity constraints, as well as supply chain disruptions.[3]

Many CIOs and COOs are now wondering how they can keep the momentum going for the long haul. To fuel IT and Operations teams forward and keep them agile in the face of monumental challenges, team leaders need to think more strategically about organization, collaboration, and workflow optimization.

Learn about fueling tech forward in the midst of global transformation and how teams can sustain success both today and in a post-pandemic world in this report.

# The IT Landscape of Today

IT and Operations teams have been at the forefront of the pandemic response in business, playing a critical role despite limitations and restrictions brought on by the unprecedented time they've found themselves in. In fact, according to a survey of over **500 IT leaders, half of respondents said that IT has not only proved its value, but become a driving force in digital transformation, leading a serious change in efforts.**[4]

## ½ of IT managers say IT is leading serious change

But these teams' pain points have also been exposed. Overworked and stretched thin, they're now taking on more responsibility and engaging in work that falls outside of their job description. IT decision makers not only gained more control over business decisions, **20% of leaders recently surveyed found that their scope of work has expanded to areas beyond IT.**[5] Even IT Teams tasked with keeping a handle on cyber security as digital crimes continue to cost companies billions are feeling the pressure: 63% of IT managers said their non-security workload increased over the course of 2020.[6]

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As teams are leaning on digital tools to get their work done, technical challenges have resulted in more annoyance and frustration compared to in-person work.[7]

With an increased workload, response times to IT cases have also increased, impacting overall operational flow. Some teams might have been advocating for tech solutions for years, but they were left with little time to prepare as work-from-home mandates began. IT and Operations teams had to respond and adapt quickly, leaving many scrambling and ill equipped to deal with new challenges.

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# The IT Operations of Tomorrow

The first severe pandemic of the 21st century has brought into focus a new historical divide felt across all aspects of life as we know it: the world before Coronavirus (B.C.) and the world after Coronavirus (A.C.).

In business, this meant rapid adoption of processes and technologies that might have been on the horizon but weren't necessarily always seen as top priorities. That has changed. Pushed to adapt in order to survive and thrive, **businesses today recognize that staying alive and agile for the long haul means innovating both internally and externally, and actively embracing new tech that can help meet demand while ensuring future growth.**

> **Leaders are planning to prioritize operational capabilities over the next two years.**

IT and Operations are more essential to the longevity of businesses than ever before, and fortunately, organizations are taking their crucial role seriously. Over 70% of businesses in a new survey are planning on making long-term IT changes.[8] New research from the IBM Institute for Business Value reveals that leaders are planning to prioritize operational capabilities–and not external growth–over the next two years, with **75% placing importance on IT resiliency.**[9]

Indeed, recognizing developing trends and implementing them as early in the process as possible can empower IT and Operations leaders and teams. This in turn will cement the seamless process needed to ensure success in all parts of the organization for years to come. Here are four trends that are poised to impact the IT and Operations teams of the future.

## 70% of businesses
### are planning on making long-term IT changes

# The Hybrid Workforce is Here to Stay

Social distancing to ensure public health and safety challenged businesses, schools, and organizations to rethink how we work, but also transformed the long-term future of the office in the process. Remote working was once seen as a temporary solution but has now become a permanent feature of work culture for companies around the world.

**Valuing flexibility and work-life balance, 73% of employees surveyed in Microsoft's 2021 report expressed a desire for more flexible post-pandemic work options,** and at least some businesses are up for meeting the changing needs of the workforce. In a Gartner survey,[10] 82% of businesses said that employees can work from home at least one day a week.

The hybrid model incorporating both remote and office work differs depending on an individual company's policies, but count on it being here to stay. As a result, IT and Operations teams must be versed on how to meet the needs and demands

of the new work reality that is more permanent than temporary. How will IT leaders manage connectivity and security effectively in a hybrid work environment? What kind of IT support can help facilitate long-term growth for the company? To combat rapidly evolving challenges in a hybrid model, what IT infrastructure and device management process is necessary for sustainability as well as scale? As the way we work enters a new era, so too will IT and Operations teams in order to ensure success for the overall health of the business.

## 82% of IT businesses
### allow employees to work from home at least one day per week

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# Automation: The Fourth Industrial Revolution Ramps Up

Emerging in the 18th century, the first Industrial Revolution profoundly changed the course of technology, culture, and socioeconomic developments for humankind, and the impact of "the most profound revolution in human history" is still felt today.

But now, we're in the midst of a revolution of our own. It's known as the Fourth Industrial Revolution, centered around the concept of smart manufacturing. Also known as Industry 4.0, it refers to what Deloitte calls "the marriage of physical assets and advanced digital technologies," including artificial intelligence,[11] 3D printing and the Internet of Things or IoT, that communicate and analyze information in a way that enables organizations– and consumers–to **make data-driven decisions.**

Based on a survey by senior business leaders representing 300 global companies, the World

Economic Forum predicts that **by 2025, automation will disrupt 85 million jobs globally** as work is divided between humans and machines. C-suite executives surveyed by Deloitte could be some of the main drivers of this change–7 out of 10 believe that long-term business success requires the integration of Industry 4.0 technologies into their operations.

**Automation is set to have a big impact across all labor sectors, including IT and Operations.** In fact, it opens the door to collaboration between these teams, fusing together common goals and projects, as they work to automate, optimize, and innovate. An integrated process and flow can be a real game changer when it comes to combating production and project timelines, influencing a culture shift that eliminates detrimental silos. **CIOs and COOs and their teams can build strong partnerships powered by smart tech for a better bottom line.**

# The Spotlight on Security Widens

From phishing to malware to data breaches, cyber attacks are on the rise, causing hefty financial and reputational damage to companies and businesses across the globe.

With 86 percent of IT practitioners reporting that someone in their organization has had a laptop lost or stolen, it's not surprising that 56 percent said that it resulted in a data breach.[12]

The hybrid workforce model is set to make combating digital hackers even more complicated, and IT asset management more important than ever. **Cybercrime is predicted to cost the world 10.5 trillion annually**

by 2025, which means **IT and Operations management teams must be vigilant about preventing security breaches for data as well as IT assets.**

Many are recognizing that the growing digital security threat needs to be addressed–at least 76 percent of executives plan to prioritize cybersecurity over the next two years.[13] Incorporating new technologies like anti-ransomware and authentication can curb the risk of breaches and help protect the business, but making security a priority and goal across all aspects of the company will foster cross-team collaboration, creating partnerships that can strengthen the bottom line during future bouts of transformation.

**86%** of IT pros have reported a lost/stolen laptop

**56%** resulted in a data breach

**76%** of executives plan to prioritize cybersecurity

# The Cloud Takes Center Stage

The Cloud, software and services running on the Internet that can be accessed from anywhere, is an essential component for an effective and elevated digital strategy. In fact, **it's thought of as the "connective tissue of Industry 4.0," [14] the crucial aspect that makes implementing it possible.**

As the backbone of the modern IT team, the Cloud consolidates tasks, allowing team members to focus on other tasks that help support the business. This was a key part of digital strategy for many companies as a large portion of the workforce became remote.

Whether it was messaging apps, storage or private internal company networks, it was Cloud technology that made this transition occur smoothly. **For IT and Operations teams, it also provided powerful visibility into tracking hardware and software inventory, including computers, mobile devices, and more, and access to data to make better informed decisions down the line.**
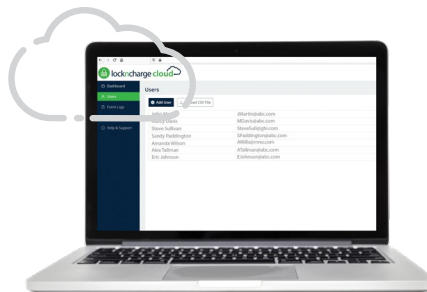
Cloud adoption statistics reveal that a whopping 83% of company workloads were determined to be stored on the Cloud by 2020,[15] and almost the same percentage of companies report that operations improved within the first few months of adopting Cloud technology.

**With benefits like scalability and flexibility, Cloud adoption is one simple way to future proof the business and take the pressure off IT teams.** As remote working sticks around, replacing on-premises applications with the Cloud provides agility for the IT team in a rapidly changing and unpredictable work environment.

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# Improving Efficiency for the Post-Digital Era

Whether it's adopting new tech or optimizing existing measures, CIOs and COOs should give serious consideration to growing and maintaining an efficient and agile workflow in the face of transformation. With IT and Operations teams impacting every other aspect of the business, **implementing changes today will prepare and support the processes of tomorrow. Here are quick tips to put you on the path to success and give you a competitive edge at this crucial juncture.**

## 1 _Take a proactive, not reactive approach_

Innovative IT and Operations teams are the heart of any healthy business. Mobilizing solutions before challenges arise is essential in mitigating the potential issues they might cause down the line. **As a team leader, advocating for big ideas and becoming a catalyst for changing workflow will transform both the organization and your career.**

## 2 _Make automation a sustainable process for the long haul_

Tools that automate and reduce workload are now considered essential and help with gaining a competitive edge, but execution is key for long-term success. Part of that includes making sure your team is on board with new solutions from the get go.

**Include your team in the decision-making process and communicate the benefit automation could bring to their team,** ultimately reducing the burden of daily tasks that suck up valuable time and energy from more strategic and rewarding work. Once that input is in, ensure that IT and Operations teams are working hand-in-hand to implement new tech solutions that create efficiency for everyone. These multi-level collaborations will help you choose the right tools, and the support will guarantee that adoption will have long-term benefits.

## 3 · Attract top-tier talent with the latest tech

Research suggests that filling an in-demand tech role takes an average of 61 days,[16] almost 20 days longer than a non-tech role. As the tech talent shortage drags on, existing teams who must work overtime to meet IT demand are also impacted. **Employing new, innovative technologies can not only help and streamline the workflow for current team members,** it can show potential candidates they'll have the support they need to do their jobs effectively.

## 4 · Optimize efficiency and security with asset tracking

Missing assets are a challenge for efficient operations. In fact, a study by Ivanti recently revealed that 43% of IT professionals report using spreadsheets as one of their resources for tracking assets, and more than half do not manage the entire lifecycle of their assets.[17]

But wait, there's more: 56% currently do not manage the entire asset lifecycle, risking redundant assets, potentially creating risk, and causing unnecessary and costly purchases.

**43%** of IT pros report using spreadsheets as one of their resources for tracking assets

**56%** do not manage the entire asset lifecycle

The hybrid workforce has complicated asset management as teams must work to keep track of hardware and software throughout its lifecycle. **Using asset management tools can increase accountability, visibility and security, creating a return on investment quickly.**

# Fuel the Future of Your Business With LocknCharge

Used by organizations like San Francisco Unified School District, commercial airline Allegiant Air, and one of the largest energy companies in the world, the FUYL Tower™ is an essential member of the IT staff of the future. It's not just a charging locker, but a solution that optimizes workflow speed and accountability, freeing up resources so busy IT and Operations teams can focus on more pressing business goals. Nearly 250+ hours and $25k+ is spent annually by an IT Team manually exchanging devices.[18] **The FUYL Tower pays for itself by reducing the loss of valuable assets, keeping**

devices secure and charged in 5 or 15 individually-lockable bays at a central location for on-site and nearby remote workers. Inherently contactless, it also prioritizes the health and safety of staff and is an ideal solution for ongoing social distancing protocols.

**Start preparing for the team of the future with a simple solution.** The FUYL Tower can work alongside your tech and operations crew, helping maximize workflow efficiency and drive growth. Contact us to learn more about how the FUYL Tower can power your organization's digital transformation.

**Learn More**

# Automate Your Workflow

With Cloud connectivity that gives admins control as well as seamless integration into existing software, the **FUYL Tower automates workflow by:**

✓ **allowing businesses to keep devices charged, secure, and tracked**

✓ **helping distribute devices from a central, safe, and accessible location**

✓ **creating accountability while saving your staff time and resources**

Eliminating manual workflow processes and simplifying the replacement of damaged, lost or forgotten devices saves time, money, and lessens the load on an already busy tech team.

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