




# Logicalis Global CIO Survey 2021–2022



**A research paper from  
Logicalis based on a global  
study of 1,000 CIOs**

# Introduction

**This report details key findings from the eighth Logicalis Global CIO Survey, which seeks to assess the evolving role of CIOs as digital technologies transform the business landscape.**

For the 2021–2022 report, we draw on a survey of 1,000 CIOs across 28 countries, to gauge their priorities and capabilities during these volatile times. The findings show that many organisations are aware of their challenges and eager to transform their businesses but are not always taking effective action to achieve their goals. In many cases, it is because their organisations lack the correct infrastructure to do so.

The survey shows that CIOs aspire to move beyond simply maintaining existing systems to steer the development of new, innovative, flexible technology architectures. They want to create robust architectures for change. They need the support of the business, backed by the right expertise, to accelerate digital transformation efforts, revolutionise their infrastructure and future-proof organisations for the modern, digital workplace.

Within this report we explore four 'In Focus' features stemming from the results of the survey, looking at:

- **The Changing Role of the CIO – Agents of Change**
- **How unlocking data can drive business strategy and accelerate growth**
- **Culture of Innovation – The Digital Workplace**
- **CIO priorities: Business continuity, resilience and mitigating risk**



# Executive Summary

The eighth annual Logicalis Global CIO Report is the most compelling yet. It finds significant, wide-ranging change in the role of the CIO, and the general business landscape putting the role of the CIO at the centre of business transformation.

The modern workspace is evolving. Gone is the traditional 9 to 5 in the office. Instead, hybrid working practices are growing exponentially worldwide, as customers' demand for digital capabilities increases and the next generation of digital-born employees are entering the workforce with different ideas of how a business should operate.

Despite these universal truths for the digital workplace, many businesses, while willing, are unable to properly support the workspace of the future. As a result, companies need to innovate to redefine and elevate their customer and employee interactions to stand out from the competition.

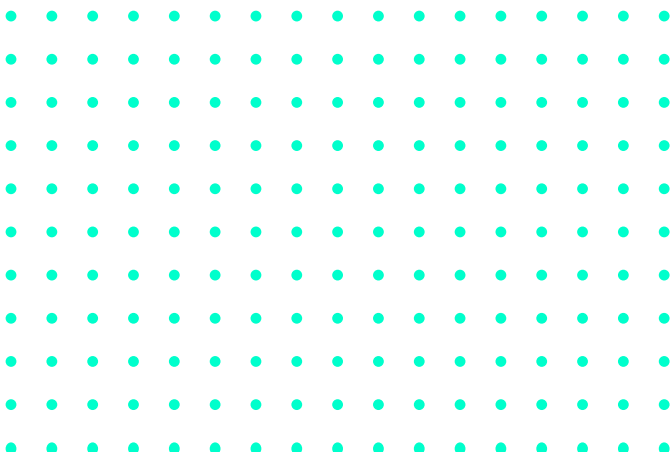
Our findings support this, with 73 percent of CIOs stating the importance of customer experience has increased and this isn't slowing down any time soon. Additionally, the report reveals that **4 in 5 (81 percent) respondents believe that their focus on redefining the customer experience will grow over the next 5 years.**

There is an opportunity for CIOs to revolutionise business infrastructure to tackle the modern world and increasingly digitally based interactions. This can be achieved by building agile and adaptable infrastructures to uncover opportunities within in the digital customer journey and empower closer customer connections. As IT leaders and Agents of Change, CIOs have the technical expertise to interpret customer engagement data and unearth hidden insights to improve the customer experience, optimise operations and achieve business objectives.

These changes require new architectures that can scale and adapt to meet rapidly evolving business needs. The cloud will play an essential part in this transformation.

Businesses must innovate to enhance the way that they interact with both customers and employees. These changes need to be data-driven, relying on levels of business telemetry that companies haven't had access to before. Companies must unlock the latent value in their operational data to drive business strategy.

**79 percent of respondents believe their organisation is falling behind competitors because of the pace of changing processes.**



The culture surrounding innovation must modernise to keep up with the competition. Businesses that don't update their approach to innovation will not be able to support new customer demands. These organisations increase the risk of employee churn as today's workforce evolves from boomers towards digital natives.

In this report, we inspect the contribution IT has on the innovation process, with findings showcasing its significant yet unevenly distributed role. Over **60 percent of CIO Survey respondents said that IT played a leading role in supporting innovation, with another 34 percent stating that it had a supporting role.** These are promising statistics, but they vary regionally, with 74 percent of US IT departments leading innovation compared to just 59 percent in Europe and 54 percent in the APAC area.

Finally, the report explores how companies must also rethink their approach to resilience and risk, especially in terms of security, as they emerge from the pandemic. With the new working model, further vulnerabilities will need to be assessed – **73 percent of security and IT executives express concerns about the continued vulnerabilities of any hybrid working model.**

Logicalis' survey results reveal high awareness of risk to the business, with 94 percent of respondents acknowledging some form of serious threat over the next 12 months. **CIOs cite data breaches (47 percent) and malware and ransomware (39 percent) as the biggest risks to their organisations. Yet only 40 percent have implemented business continuity plans** that would help their companies keep running during major disruptive events.

Ultimately, the role and priorities of the CIO have changed drastically because of the pandemic, and urgent action is needed to deliver for customers, keep ahead of competition, prepare workforces for the digital workplace and ensure business continuity and resilience in the post-pandemic economy.

Yet, only **27 percent of organisations listed business continuity and resilience as a top priority, putting it second-to-last in the rankings.**

A surprisingly low figure given that businesses had to rely on business continuity plans during the pandemic with relatively few businesses were prepared for full scale remote working.

Is your business fully prepared to navigate the ongoing challenges of the pandemic, and reap the benefits of an innovative, digital and secure workplace to drive business growth? Read on to find out and further explore the findings of the full Logicalis Global CIO Survey 2021-22.



IN FOCUS

# The Changing Role of the CIO – Agents of Change



# How can you lead your organisation into the post-pandemic digital economy?

**If the last 12 months have taught us one thing, it is that companies must have business continuity plans and be prepared for changeable conditions, including customer needs. More than ever, customers expect their digital interactions with businesses to be as sophisticated as their in-person interactions. If we take the retail industry as an example, over the last 12 months, retailers were forced to rapidly adapt to the sudden changes of worldwide lockdowns. Those who were able to shift their entire business model online survived, and those who didn't faced the harsh reality of business shutdown.**

As agents of change, CIOs must collaborate with their wider exec teams to help their organisations update their interactions with customers. That includes using their infrastructure to create data-driven customer engagements.

## **Customer engagements are becoming increasingly digital**

The pandemic has driven customer engagements increasingly online, with [PwC's June 2021 Global Digital Pulse](#) survey finding that more than half of global consumers have become more digital in the past 12 months.

Lockdown created a new generation of consumers driven by both caution over public health concerns and, increasingly, more introverted attitudes. Customers now make more purchases online and

even prefer to avoid direct calls with sales representatives. A recent [Gartner report](#) supports this, with 80 percent of all B2B sales interactions between suppliers and buyers expected to be online by 2025.

This shift in buying behaviours leaves companies facing new challenges when engaging with consumers. Those that haven't had a digital strategy need to get one and quickly. In fact, the [2021 'State of Sales' LinkedIn Report](#) reveals a significant majority (86 percent) of sales managers say that the capability to cope with change is more important than it was five years ago. Businesses must be agile and embrace digital in the fight to capture and keep consumers' attention. They must create friction-free ways to serve customers online.

## **CIOs are prioritising customer experience**

According to the Logicalis 2021 Global CIO survey, over four in five CIOs (81 percent) believe that redefining the customer or employee experience will become more relevant in the next five years. The pandemic has been a driving factor here, with almost three quarters (73 percent) of respondents reporting that it made customer experience more important.

Customer experience is intricately linked to digital transformation. An existing trend, it has been driven even further by the pandemic. Three in four (74 percent) CIOs drew a straight line between COVID-19 and the importance of digital transformation, with almost all (98 percent) reporting that it had accelerated their digital transformation plans to some degree. Customer service was the third most targeted area in digital transformation projects, with 45 percent of respondents reporting accelerated efforts in this area.

Digital transformation is not only about technology but also about culture. As businesses continue to address customer experience through digital transformation, they need to lead by example when it comes to business culture to best maximise digital transformation efforts.

### A focus on strategy is crucial

To power this customer-centric approach, CIOs must move away from day-to-day management tasks. In its own [2021 CIO survey](#), Gartner found that the role of a CIO is becoming more important than ever as CEOs recognise the value of technology to the organisation and its impact on business outcomes. As technology becomes essential in the emerging digital economy, an organisation's success depends on whether the CIO can move from being a functional leader to a strategic business leader. Forward-looking CIOs, along with other members of the leadership team, that embrace change to become more strategic increasingly have the CEO's ear and can positively impact a businesses' bottom line.

For CIOs to make that transition, it is no longer enough just to keep the technology engines running. Instead, they must take their place in the driver's seat, steering technology strategy towards an adaptable future. In a recent report by [Deloitte](#), the Global CIO accurately said: "The role of a technology leader is not to develop a digital strategy or vision—it is to embed digital in the business strategy."

Shifting the focus to business innovation may not be easy for many CIOs. As we have seen in previous Logicalis CIO surveys, innovation has been a lower priority for CIOs. But, looking to 2021, and there are promising signs.

# 79%

THE 2021 CIO SURVEY FOUND THAT 79 PERCENT OF CIOs SPEND MORE TIME ON INNOVATION.

# 77%

IT ALSO SAW 77 PERCENT INVESTING MORE OF THEIR DAY IN STRATEGIC PLANNING TO HELP CREATE MODERN TECHNOLOGIES THAT WILL HELP THEIR BUSINESSES MEET OBJECTIVES SUCH AS BETTER CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENTS.

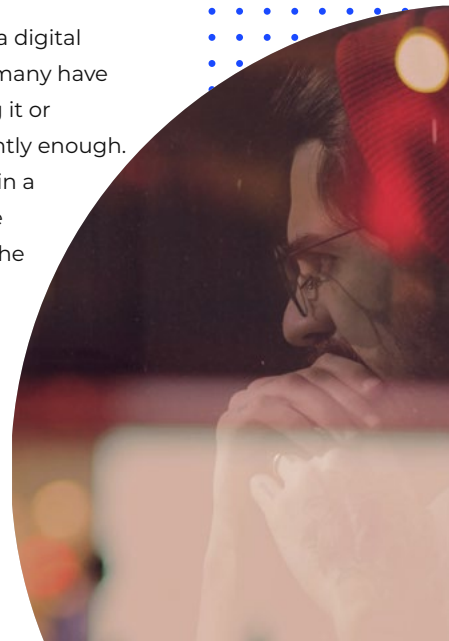
### Customer data is key

An essential task for CIOs is to build infrastructure that can provide fast access to powerful customer data. That data can create new insights and boost critical metrics, including conversion rates, customer satisfaction scores, and retention.

Organisations still have work to do when it comes to unlocking the value of customer data. While almost all are using it to some degree, fewer than two-thirds are using it for its most popular purposes:

- Developing new products and services that will appeal to customers (58 percent).
- Creating targeted marketing strategies (57 percent).
- Driving agility and speed (48 percent).

Whilst many companies have offered a digital customer experience for a long time, many have not interrogated the data surrounding it or redefined the user experience frequently enough. Without being fully aware of the data in a business and where it is held, it can be challenging to release its value. With the continued development of new technologies and strong data and information lifecycle management, CIOs must take action to unearth hidden insights from the customer journey to achieve business objectives.



# How well do you really know your customers?

## To succeed, CIOs must be customer-obsessed

Building customer-centric infrastructure will involve a new set of skills for some CIOs. They must become more involved with customers regularly. CIOs should try to understand how conditions are changing from a customer's perspective and what this means for the customer journey. They must crystallise this understanding and infuse it into new digital strategies that support these needs.

**“Businesses need to be customer-obsessed, offering excellent digital experiences that connect with customer need. The best way to do this is to leverage emerging technologies to better understand the customer journey, mapping and monitoring it to draw out actionable insights,”** explains Toby Alcock, CTO, Logicalis.

CIOs should leverage external experts to help drive more efficient customer engagements. A third of survey respondents already see pandemic-driven changes in customer requirements as drivers for sourcing outside help.

## Multinational retailer builds customer loyalty

An Irish multinational retailer was looking to modernise their business-critical Value Club Loyalty programme. Like many brick-and-mortar retailers in 2020, they were already building a mobile application to vault its loyalty programme into the 21st century and out of the era of coupon clipping.

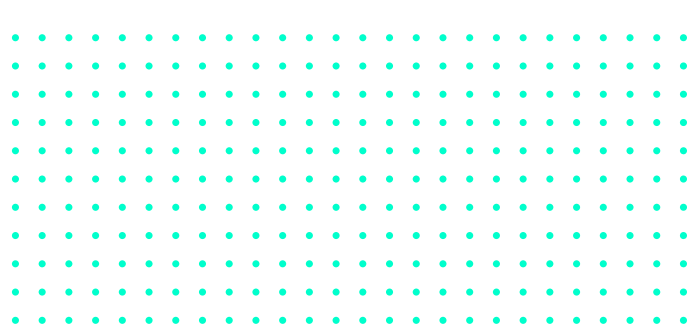
The pandemic had accelerated the need for an efficient platform that would not only keep the retailer relevant but grow and diversify its customer base. Understanding what their customer wanted, the planned app would give customers access to promotions and special offers at their fingertips that was much more convenient than a traditional value club card.

To do this they required a secure, flexible and scalable cloud-based development environment that prioritised the protection of internal and customer data. They had already begun their transformation journey but needed a partner to provide a holistic solution.

With a pre-existing relationship, Logicalis was able to take a leadership role, aligning the retailers' requirements with other third-party interdependencies to meet business objectives. Through a series of workshops Logicalis was able to guide the transformation process to define a structure based on Microsoft Azure with a secure landing zone that incorporated Microsoft Sentinel.

Through the Managed Security solution built on Microsoft Azure, the retailer was able to launch a scalable, agile solution that protected both internal and customer data to the highest degree, to form the base architecture for the Value Club Loyalty programme.

As a result, the retailer is looking ahead to growing its Value Club members through broader and more frequent interactions with customers. The modernised Value Club Loyalty programme app promises to deliver a better customer experience both in-store and online, making them a competitive player in the European retail landscape. Additionally, with ongoing security support, the retailer is able to scale the app securely in the future and continually adapt to evolving customer needs.



IN FOCUS

# How unlocking data can drive business strategy and accelerate growth



# Are you using data to drive digital transformation?

**Data is the fuel for a successful digital transformation. It enables companies to make bold decisions backed by rock-solid intelligence. To unlock its value, businesses need an agile, scalable technology infrastructure with robust processes and policies, as data capacities change and evolve.**

According to the [World Economic Forum](#), 463 exabytes of data will be created every single day by 2025. Staggeringly it is estimated that 90 percent of the world's data was generated in the last two years alone. The rapid and continuous creation of data drives an endless cycle. As the amount of data being produced increases, so does the total volume of data that needs to be processed and stored by businesses. In turn businesses are increasingly using analytics to analyse that data and unearth insights – which yet again creates even more data and thus further data analysis. However, it is the quality of the data that is stored which truly matters.

In fact, [55 percent](#) of data collected by companies is considered 'dark data', data which is collected, processed and stored but not used for any other purpose. Businesses need to first look to differentiate between 'dark data' and usable data that will generate usable business insights.

Once businesses have identified the quality data which can be used for analysis, having the right tech stack in place allows them the flexibility necessary to handle the increase in data with capacity built into the underlying structure of the business. Infrastructure that doesn't scale will bar businesses from crucial insights, won't support business ambitions and will hinder growth. Hybrid cloud solutions offer a blended approach with on-prem infrastructure offers a solution

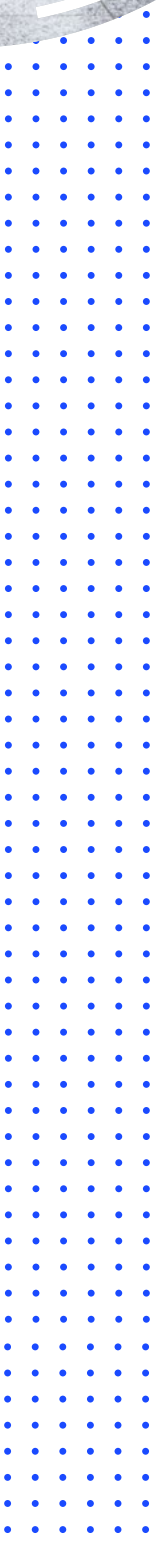
which safely scales with business need, using the right technology, to store the right data at the right price.

Responses to the Logicalis 2021 Global CIO survey bear this out, with 85 percent of CIOs planning to focus on finding new ways to increase agility and speed in the next five years. The same number identified building and operating new digital platforms and operating models as a priority.

**Furthermore, the study found that almost all (98 percent) CIOs, report that the pandemic accelerated their organisations digital transformation plans, yet many (75 percent) are unable to unlock their data to drive a successful digital transformation.**

Building on this, the survey results reveal that less than half of respondents (48 percent) use data to increase speed and agility in their operations, and only a quarter of respondents use data to inform overall business strategy.

In fact, additional recent research on digital transformation efforts found that [79 percent of executives](#) admitted they do not review internal processes or set objectives before a transformation process begins. This has led to over 80 percent of digital transformation strategies failing, meaning businesses are unable to enhance processes, productivity, and agility. Post-pandemic, [agility is a key differentiator](#) for organisations and is a crucial element for business resilience, as without it, businesses risk losing out to competitors.



## Preparing for the post-pandemic marketplace

Businesses have shifted priorities throughout the pandemic with the need for better business continuity and resilience in line with digital transformation. Over 70 percent of respondents to Logicalis' CIO survey say that business resilience has become more important to their organisation in the wake of the pandemic, with over half (54 percent) linking that directly to the need for a disaster recovery plan. Whilst business continuity plans focus on keeping businesses operational during a disaster, disaster recovery focuses on restoring data access and IT infrastructure after a disaster. Despite admitting the need for a disaster recovery plan however, more than half of businesses (55 percent) have yet to adopt one.

Digital transformation's connection to all parts of the business makes it a daunting prospect. While leaders realise its potential, they still face challenges to achieve their transformation goals and ready themselves for a competitive future.

This came through clearly in the Logicalis CIO survey, with three quarters of respondents admitting that their organisations are struggling to unlock the data that would drive a successful digital transformation strategy.

**Toby Alcock, CTO of Logicalis comments:**  
**"Data driven organisations gain a critical competitive advantage, equipping leaders with key insights to drive informed decisions and create unparalleled business agility. After 18 months of disruption and rapid transformation, organisational leaders need to reassess business operations to define a more flexible, adaptable, and scalable environment for businesses, partners, and customers. By focusing on data as the central tenet of the digital transformation, businesses can directly attribute these positive changes to top-line revenue or bottom-line outcomes."**

# 55%

DESPITE 54 PERCENT OF CIOs WITHIN THE LOGICALIS CIO SURVEY DIRECTLY STATING THE NEED FOR A DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN, MORE THAN 55 PERCENT OF BUSINESSES HAVE YET TO ADOPT ONE.

## Unlock data and enhance agility through the cloud

Cloud technology is a key enabler of digital transformation due to its flexibility. Companies can flex their computing and storage capacity while quickly assembling applications using powerful API-based services. Benefits like these are driving many respondents to invest in cloud technology, with 59 percent reporting that most of their services and technology is cloud hosted.

CIOs that want to meet the challenges of modern business must build the technology architecture to support them. Cloud technology is mandatory for companies that truly want to tap into the benefits of digital transformation but building a mature approach to the cloud is a challenge. External services that can offer strategic and technical advice are powerful allies as businesses build architectures for change.

Cloud services cover a vast range of options now, and one clear benefit is that firms can avoid the upfront cost and complexity of owning and maintaining their own IT infrastructure, instead paying for what they use when they use it. The recent global [chip shortage](#) affecting the semiconductor industry has put this into sharp focus for many businesses with cloud offering a real alternative to the lengthy lead times. A study by [Nasscom](#) revealed that more than 70 percent of CIOs are prioritising digital spending and moving to an OpEx model.

Cloud migration offers a range of benefits from security to scalability. Successful and optimised cloud migration, especially in the post-pandemic digital economy, will be critical for achieving real-time performance and efficiency. On top of this a successful cloud migration allows businesses to assess where they are versus where they want to be, with the flexibility to achieve their goals no matter where they are.

# What's stopping you from harnessing the benefits of the cloud?

## Challenges in cloud migration

A lack of skill and internal resources are big factors in this slow migration to the cloud, as companies do their best to navigate the complexities of an entirely new technology platform and accompanying underlying disciplines spanning technology and business culture. This showed up clearly in the responses from those companies that were not planning a cloud migration at all; complexity was an issue for 34 percent of them, while a lack of expertise was a key barrier for 21 percent.

Businesses are increasingly outsourcing their technology services to cope with these challenges, with 97 percent using external services to some degree. While companies use these services to overcome a lack of internal resources, they highlighted additional benefits as well, with flexibility and efficiency were the biggest drivers, cited by 44 percent of respondents.

It is crucial to plan a cloud migration thoroughly as well as considering future needs to achieve long-term goals. By taking a lifecycle approach, companies can create an action plan that anticipates potential problems and produces solutions, making it easier to overcome obstacles and improve not only the success of cloud migration but overall business success as they harness the power of the cloud.

## Reducing complexity and driving business optimization at Alsina Formwork

Alsina Formwork provides solutions for concrete structures that help customers improve project efficiency and safety. With rapid growth and expansion to several subsidiaries and territories, Alsina's organisation also grew in complexity of systems and processes, making day to day tasks time consuming for employees and exposing gaps in security.

Alsina identified that process innovation and product improvement would be their competitive advantage, therefore an investment in technology was key for the future development of their company.

Logicalis worked with Alsina to migrate their ERP from Private Cloud to Azure, adding a security and back up layer to deliver immediate productivity and security gains. Logicalis ensured their Azure environment was optimised and right sized, gaining cost savings immediately through reserved instances discount.

The outcomes of the migration to the cloud were immediate. It enabled operations to become more agile and translated into cost benefits. By removing complexity from their operations, Alsina were able to enhance the employee user experience. Through right sizing the project, Alsina saw cost savings within the first month, with zero risk and minimal downtime. Through improved productivity, the Alsina team can now focus on more demanding projects, providing customers with top-tier service whilst also continuing pace and scale through the capabilities afforded by cloud

IN FOCUS

# Culture of Innovation – The Digital Workplace



# What does innovation look like in your workplace?

**Innovation drives business transformation, and as a result generates new working practices, products, and services. It's a source of competitive advantage, but it's difficult to achieve without the union of technology, management, culture, and the most important ingredient of all: people.**

The task of inspiring and nurturing innovation is increasingly falling to CIOs in their evolving role as Agents of Change. Research by [Gartner](#) reveals that CIOs are expected to relocate funding to digital innovation as businesses who invest in innovating are 2.7 times more likely to be leaders than trailers. To establish a successful business, CIOs must explore ways to encourage innovative processes as a post-pandemic workforce shifts beneath their feet.

CIOs must create the right conditions for creativity, including building channels to help generate, harvest, and grow innovative ideas. The stakes are high; companies that get this mix right can excel, through new working practices and perhaps even new markets. Those that fail risk losing their competitive advantage and potentially talent as workers look for an innovative environment elsewhere.

According to the 2021 Logicalis Global CIO Survey, CIOs recognise the urgency of integrating innovation into the business. Over three quarters of CIOs have increased the amount of time they spend on innovation over the last twelve months.

# 95%

THE LOGICALIS SURVEY FURTHER REVEALED THAT 95 PERCENT OF BUSINESSES ARE NOW USING INNOVATION TO INCREASE THEIR BUSINESS RESILIENCE.

## **A gap growing into a chasm – businesses are falling behind**

CIOs are being tasked with driving business innovation with respondents stating they now dedicate 30 percent of their time to innovation. Innovation is high on the CIO agenda to drive business resilience, operate new digital platforms and improve customer experience. Indeed, the Logicalis survey further revealed that 95 percent of businesses are now using innovation to increase their business resilience.

The interest in innovation is laudable, but it doesn't translate into widespread action.

The ideal innovative environment encourages small-scale experiments that can generate quick wins in the form of business success or learning opportunities. This culture of embedded creativity leads to continuous cycles of improvement. It reduces friction, replacing bureaucracy with a structure that embraces flexibility and nurtures employees' ideas.

Yet only 27 percent of respondents reported this approach to innovation in their organisations. Instead, less than a quarter (21 percent) confine innovation to specific areas and departments, while one in three say that innovation consists of large-scale projects driven by dedicated teams.

Most businesses lack an innovative culture and organisational willingness to evolve and adopt new technologies. The culture surrounding innovation must modernise or organisations risk becoming outdated, falling behind and ruining the customer experience. To make matters worse, businesses jeopardise losing their most valuable assets, their employees, as staff demand more creative environments as today's workforce evolves from boomers to digital natives.

# Do you encourage company-wide innovation?

**We are amidst a global shortage of digital talent. Companies can't risk losing their best assets through a lack of innovation. Innovation makes employees feel part of something bigger than just their day-to-day responsibilities and invites them to make a difference for customers and the wider industry.**

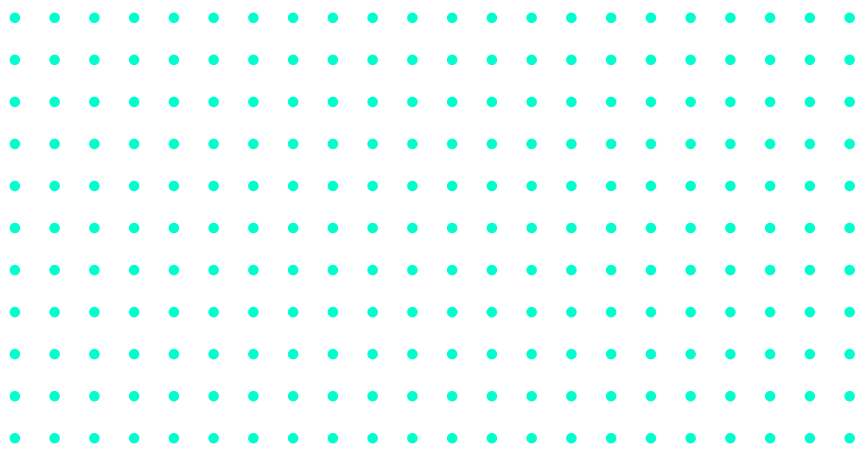
To unlock employees' potential, businesses must first understand them and how they are changing. A mixture of demographic traits and reactions to the pandemic have made flexibility and autonomy increasingly important to employees. PwC's January 2021 Remote Working survey found that 79 percent of employees highlight the importance of flexibility to manage family matters alongside work and many employees are eager to keep up remote working practices.

CIOs already recognise the need to enhance the employee experience. According to Logicalis' 2021 Global CIO survey, 50 percent of organisations have learned that they need to focus more heavily on employee wellbeing. As we emerge from the pandemic, work life balance is key with the lines between home and work becoming ever more blurred which could have a major impact on employee mental health and productivity. It also found 80 percent of CIOs are preparing to focus more heavily on employee experiences during the next 5 years. Improving the employee experience will increase engagement, productivity, and support, reflecting how they engage with customers whilst providing them with the tools they need to succeed.

## Innovation relies on robust technology infrastructure

Robust and agile business infrastructure is critical to supporting both the innovation process and the employees that deliver it. Technology platforms must be flexible and open, enabling the creation of powerful applications that empower employees and create enjoyable working environments. These platforms, typically built on modern, scalable cloud platforms with interoperable services, will support strong collaboration for company-wide innovation.

IT's contribution to the innovative process is significant, but unevenly distributed. Over 60 percent of CIO Survey respondents said that it played a leading role in supporting innovation, with another 34 percent stating that it had a supporting role. These are promising statistics, but they vary regionally, with 74 percent of US IT departments leading innovation compared to just 59 percent in Europe and 54 percent in the APAC area.



## Companies that don't innovate will fall behind competitors

Companies that fail to modernise their platforms and drive innovation into their culture risk falling behind in the race to support a rapidly changing customer base. The race is on to change working environments as today's workforce evolves from a majority of manually focused boomers to digital natives. In its [Remote Working survey](#), PwC warned that businesses not making this switch could risk losing talent to competitors.

The Logicalis survey found that 79 percent of respondents already believe their organisations are falling behind the competition as they fail to match the pace of change. Over a third of respondents worried that they were lagging in efforts to increase efficiencies (38 percent), streamline workflows (37 percent), and enhance services (36 percent).

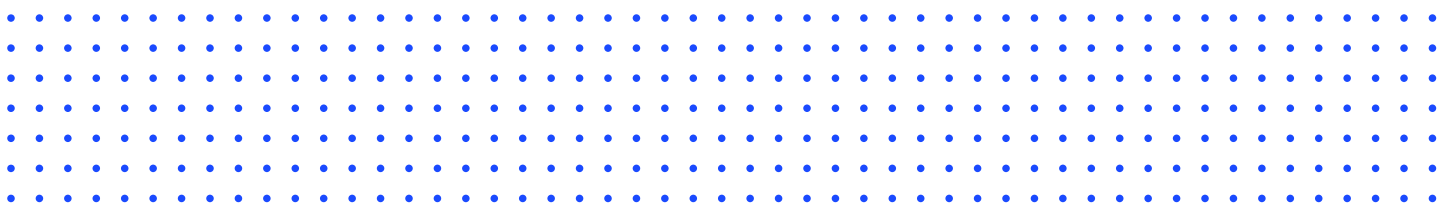
**“Toby Alcock, CTO of Logicalis: “If CIOs believe they are currently falling behind competitors, the time to innovate is now, and it starts with fostering a culture of innovation. An innovative culture brings people together, allows employees to explore their creative skills, and bolsters employee engagement. As a result, employees will produce ground-breaking ideas and solutions and in turn, employees will feel satisfied within their roles and employee turnover will decrease.”**

# 79%

THE LOGICALIS SURVEY FOUND THAT 79 PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS ALREADY BELIEVE THEIR ORGANISATIONS ARE FALLING BEHIND THE COMPETITION AS THEY FAIL TO MATCH THE PACE OF CHANGE

**“As Agents of Change, CIOs need new ways to tackle innovation with disseminated workforces and hybrid work patterns. Furthermore, CIOs are dealing with a new generation of workers that expect open, easy, collaborative communications, flexible working, and autonomy as standard. Without taking these measures, businesses risk losing top talent, which is becoming a scarce resource, to competitors that are more advanced.”**

The time to encourage company-wide innovation and collaboration was yesterday. The next-best time is today. The first step is creating a cloud-based platform that encourages the free flow of ideas and then enables employees to action them. By partnering with an IT expert, businesses can focus on building an innovative culture while handing the day-to-day technical responsibilities over to the experts. Third-party consultants can help upskill companies in this area, giving them the capabilities, they need to create strong foundations for innovation.



IN FOCUS

# CIO priorities: Business continuity, resilience and mitigating risk



# Is your organisation prepared for the hybrid workforce of the future?

Companies stand at a crossroads in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. They have rushed to support remote workers with makeshift infrastructures that tested their information security skills. Now, these environments are becoming more permanent as new hybrid working practices persist.

While pressures are mounting to reopen offices and reinvigorate city centres, as many as [82 percent of company leaders](#) plan to let their employees work remotely at least part time, according to Gartner, Inc. For many companies, the office will never look the same again. [PwC's Remote Working Survey](#) found fewer than one in five executives expecting a complete return to pre-pandemic conditions.

Remote working, at least some of the time, will be a permanent fixture. But with the new remote paradigm comes new challenges, especially in security.

As businesses reconcile themselves with these long-term changes, they are accepting the need for a renewed focus on both security and business resilience. The Logicalis Global CIO Survey found that the pandemic has made business continuity and resilience more important to 72 percent of organisations. Over half of all respondents also said that the pandemic taught them the need to adopt disaster recovery plans, and 80 percent said that they had spent more time increasing their security defences over the last 12 months. As companies evolve, they must maintain and improve this security and resilience as they strike out with new innovations in areas such as customer and employee experience. No matter the technology, without the right security policies and procedures in place an attack can take place. The key is making sure the entire business is educated on security risk and management to support new security technologies.

## Securing the digital workplace of the future

Creating a cohesive digital workplace ecosystem for this new workforce, regardless of physical location, involves more effort and strategy than simply handing out laptops, turning to cloud apps, and using a VPN (Virtual Private Network).

A secure remote-work strategy is essential for business resilience with increasing threats of cyberattacks on remote workforces. Exacerbated by the pandemic, there are now 648 cyber threats per minute, according to a recent security intelligence report. 2020 saw unprecedented attacks as cybercriminals exploited vulnerabilities in businesses' security perimeters due to the shift to remote working.

Cybersecurity leaders must consider the expectations of the next normal when it comes to assessing both current cybersecurity activities and long-term cyber-risk strategies. This leads to some important questions. *How can organisations manage data securely regardless of whether it is located at home, inside your organisation or with their suppliers? And how should businesses implement effective and seamless security controls to all the devices, both corporate and personal, used by their employees?*

94%

47%

39%

LOGICALIS' SURVEY RESULTS REVEAL HIGH AWARENESS OF BUSINESS RISK, WITH 94 PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS ACKNOWLEDGING SOME FORM OF SERIOUS THREAT OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS. CIOs CITE DATA BREACHES (47 PERCENT) AND MALWARE AND RANSOMWARE (39 PERCENT) AS THE BIGGEST RISKS TO THEIR ORGANISATIONS.



## Businesses urgently need to adopt additional security measures

Despite CIOs being aware of the increased risk, awareness didn't translate uniformly into action. Risk mitigation wasn't a common performance metric among organisations. Barely a third of them cited risk mitigation as a measure of performance. Moreover, while most CIOs cite business continuity and resilience as a key takeaway from the pandemic, only 27 percent of organisations listed business continuity and resilience as a top three priority during the next 12 months, putting it second-to-last in the rankings.

Where businesses have invested in mitigating security risks, the lion's share (66 percent) have put money into technology such as firewalls, cyber protection software, and password management. Half of all companies invested in more staff training.

Although CIOs recognise the importance of implementing disaster recovery plans, fewer than half (45 percent) of businesses have done so. Only 40 percent have implemented business continuity plans that would help their companies keep running during major disruptive events. Investing in tools alone won't protect organisations; they must have policies and playbooks at the ready to support their operations through disruptive times.

## Technology is only as efficient as you make it

Protecting themselves from disruption and security threats isn't the only focus for modern businesses recovering from the pandemic. They also see the need to explore new opportunities through innovation, adapting their existing business model to new conditions, and potentially even grabbing new market share by investing in new products and services.

# 79%

79 PERCENT OF CIOs CONSIDER INNOVATION A FOCAL AREA OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS AS THEY STRIVE TO INCREASE EMPLOYEE AND CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES.

One area where companies are investing in new technologies and innovation is the internet of things (IoT). Logicalis found 96 percent of CIOs are using this technology in some form. The most popular use case is improving customer experience, with 55 percent of respondents focused on it. Increasing operational efficiencies (52 percent) and enhancing existing products and services (46 percent) come close behind.

The key focuses and priorities for CIOs and their businesses over the next 12 months are monumental tasks and often aren't easy to achieve. 73 percent of security and IT executives' express concerns about the continued vulnerabilities of any hybrid working model.

Businesses can't afford to risk their security. Data breaches and operational disruptions can lead to financial, legal, and regulatory ramifications. Yet at the same time they must invest in innovation, using new technologies to keep themselves at the forefront, enhance customer service, and generate more revenues.



## The best of both worlds, increased innovation and enhanced security

While innovation and risk mitigation seem to be opposing forces, businesses see a clear link between the two, with customers wanting to deal with companies that are secure and care for their data. Businesses that have suffered a major data loss often see a larger percentage of their customers move to competitors as a result. The survey found 95 percent of respondents using innovation to create business resilience, indicating that these two forces can be complementary in an organisation.

For example, well-planned cloud migrations can simultaneously boost security and introduce powerful new capabilities that streamline product and service development. They can support collaboration and innovation among distributed workforces with maximum efficiency.

The cloud helps companies create flexible business continuity frameworks. It offers a holistic approach to security that can anticipate and detect emergent threats before they attack an operation's infrastructure, protecting hybrid workforces.

**“Toby Alcock, CTO of Logicalis says: “Over the last 18 months, many businesses set up interim solutions to cope with remote working, with security and disaster recovery very much experiencing a trial by fire. Some measures worked, but more action is needed to secure hybrid workers and enhance business resilience for the long-term.”**

**“Businesses should adopt a holistic security approach with the capabilities to anticipate and detect threats before they even take place. Investing in optimising security operations that give a complete view will allow organisations to mitigate risk and adapt to future obstacles, whether cyberattack-related or further market disruption. With a comprehensive plan, created with advice from third-party experts, companies can rest assured knowing they're protected.”**

Planning for both innovation and risk means constructing a foundation for change that is agile, flexible, and secure. Many companies lack the in-house skills to engineer an effective foundation that addresses strategic, tactical, and operational realms mapped to a business's overarching objectives. Therefore, companies are investing in third-party support to help. The survey revealed that 35 percent of companies had invested in more third-party expertise, and that 31 percent of CIOs saw supporting business continuity as a driver for using external services.

A partner can provide holistic services throughout the lifecycle, to ensure your business reaches its full potential as it grows. With the right strategic approach, companies can combine security, resilience, and innovation, to create a clear competitive advantage. Working in partnership with a third-party expert, organisations can remove the barriers to innovation, drive business growth and unlock future success in the rapidly emerging digital economy.

To learn more about how our services can help your organisation please get in touch at: [info@logicalis.com](mailto:info@logicalis.com)

