

# Australian organisations are ready for a new wave of digital innovation.

The disruption of the past 12 months has caused Australian businesses to rapidly scale their investments in technology and transformation. As the dust begins to settle and businesses look ahead again, many businesses now plan to turn those towards innovation and creating a competitive advantage.

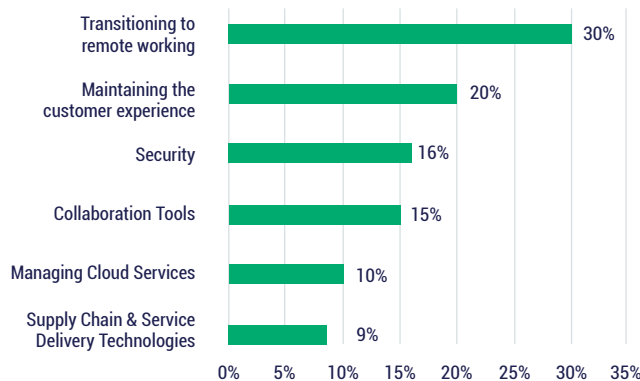
An IDG Pulse survey, conducted from 22 December 2020 to 2 February 2021, and commissioned by business **nbn**<sup>™</sup>, found that nearly half of businesses in the IDG readership have plans to further accelerate the digital transformation efforts they have made in the past year.

From the 50 business representatives that participated, the survey also found:

- Respondents reported the transition to remote working was the biggest disruption for businesses this past year, followed by maintaining customer experience and security.
- Over half (**50 per cent**) of businesses plan on accelerating their digital strategy this year.
- Organisations believe that they are more agile and innovative now thanks to the investments they made in digital technology over the past year.
- Over **50 per cent** of organisations either had existing resiliency plans that accounted for COVID or were able to rapidly adapt to the new conditions.
- Close to a third (**30 per cent**) of IT leaders reported that simply transitioning to remote work has been disruptive, and over one in ten said that security concerns had caused a headache in doing so.
- Approximately **one in five** business leaders consider maintaining the customer experience as the chief concern.

These trends will be the key drivers for digital transformation and customer experience in the year ahead.

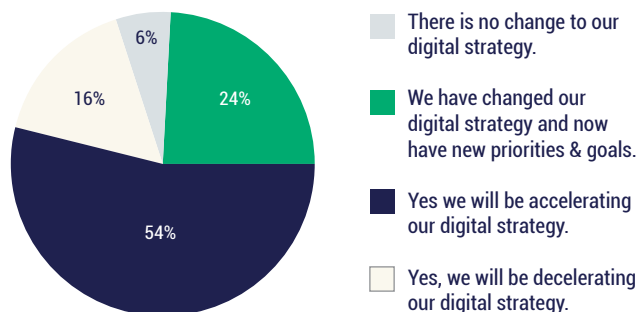
## What technology challenges did you find most disruptive to your business this year?



## The value of transformation

For many businesses, mitigating against disruption was the top priority for 2020. In 2021, most business leaders see new opportunities to supercharge their digital plans by leveraging the investments made in digital technology over the past 12 months. Only six per cent of IT leaders believe that there will be no change to their digital strategy moving forward, and fewer than one in five (16 per cent) reported that they would be decelerating the digital journey that they have undertaken for the past year.

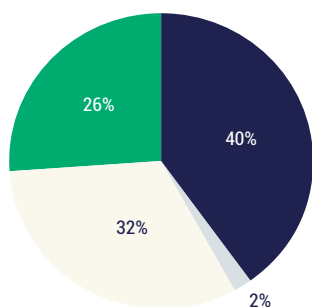
## Have the events of 2020 caused you to reassess your digital strategy?



For over 70 per cent of IT leaders, digital transformation is firmly on the agenda for the future. Where previously networked environments might have been siloed, CIOs are being encouraged to undertake digital transformation exercises to create digital environments that allow for greater agility and flexibility, and in doing so innovating via greater efficiencies and speed to market with products. For over 50 per cent of businesses, it's not just about maintaining their investments from the past year but accelerating them moving forwards.

With close to two-thirds (68 per cent) of IT leaders feeling that they are now more agile and innovative than before the pandemic, it is an indication of how effective Australian businesses have been in building resilience and seizing opportunities through the disruption.

### Do you believe your business was ready and prepared to adjust to COVID-19's new ways of working?

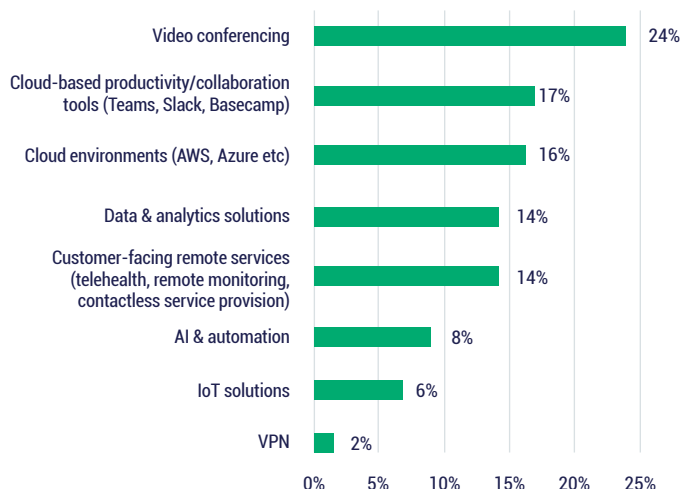


- We had not planned for this, but we were able to develop a resiliency plan & respond after some disruption.
- We have not been able to adjust how we work & have experienced extreme disruption.
- We moved slowly, but had everything we needed in place to transition smoothly to the new ways of working.
- Yes, we had robust resiliency plans in place & were able to rapidly shift to new ways of working.

As organisations start to look to the “new normal,” survey data shows the following five technology areas will see the most significant levels of ongoing investment:

- Video conferencing (24%)
- Cloud-based productivity/collaboration tools (17%)
- Cloud environments (16%)
- Data and analytics solutions (14%)
- Customer-facing remote services (14%)

### Which of the following technologies are you planning on investing in or continuing to use into the future?



The businesses that will be best placed to capitalise on these opportunities are those that optimise its network to support their data needs. In short, having the right connectivity plan for the organisation's needs will allow it to become more reliant on the performance and appropriateness of their network across bandwidth, data, and consumption.

Businesses that have developed mission-critical applications that are delivered over the cloud (e.g. a cloud-based application development environment) should consider network options that can help with prioritising some data pathways. Service providers can leverage this capability to ensure that the performance of their customer's apps operates as mission-critical while minimising the risk of applications being interrupted by other traffic across the carrier network.

Having access to symmetrical upload and download speeds is another important feature because data is increasingly a two-way street for organisations. While residential consumers of Internet services are more heavily weighted to undertaking download activity – video streams, gaming, and so on – enterprise businesses rely just as heavily on their ability to send data, through communications, with the live manipulation of data, and interacting with teammates and customers over cloud services. In that context, businesses are pushing higher volumes of data and can access greater upload capacity with business-grade network plans such as business **nbn™** Enterprise Ethernet.\*

\*business **nbn™** Enterprise Ethernet is only available in the **nbn™** Fixed Line network footprint and at limited premises served by the **nbn™** Fixed Wireless and Satellite networks.

## Structuring the organisation for innovation

The data from the Pulse Survey paints a picture of Australian organisations that have weathered the disruption from the pandemic by investing in technology to build resiliency and remain operational, are now looking to the competitive opportunities that their new, transformed environments allow.

IT leaders want to further transform environments to become even more data-driven. business **nbn**<sup>™</sup> is providing the digital backbone that Australian businesses can leverage to help deliver on their digital ambitions and continue to scale their new data-led business models. In addition to symmetrical speeds options, the ongoing commitment to providing access to business-grade fibre plans to more enterprises across Australia means that more enterprises than ever can access data services based on priority data at the network level and premium business-grade fibre solutions.#

For those Australian CIOs and business leaders currently tackling digital acceleration, these Pulse Survey insights present three key threads to consider:

### 1) What do you want to achieve with your data?

Can the network foundation rapidly account for rises in usage and demand? Are you able to scale your digital products and services in line with customer expectations? Both the network foundation and the service provider configuration should be customised to specific organisational needs to realise its full digital capability.

### 2) What performance commitments are on the network?

Priority support and service level agreements (SLAs) are more crucial now than ever, with work environments being 24/7 operations and the level of disruption caused by downtime. A 2019 study by Cisco placed the cost of downtime of a single application within the IT environment at nearly \$762,000 per incident.

### 3) What is the long-term strategy for a digitally transformed environment?

Will the enterprise be expanding its use of emerging technologies like the Internet of Things (IoT) and adopting edge environments and AI solutions? As the scope expands, can the network keep pace with change?

Finally, CIOs and business leaders should consider the partners that they work with. Only 30 per cent of digital transformation projects equal or exceed their expectations. Rather than avoid transformation and risk being outmaneuvered and disrupted, businesses should work with technology and network partners that can suggest solutions that enable desired transformation outcomes while mitigating potential risks. **nbn**<sup>™</sup> as a channel-driven organisation, has partnerships with a wide range of service providers that can meet the unique needs of Australian businesses big and small.

The pace of digital transformation has never been faster. The expectation of the past 12 months was that it would slow technology spending down, however the opposite has proven true as transformation provided solutions to the disruption. Now, businesses find themselves looking to leverage these investments to assist with the recovery and rebound.

business **nbn**<sup>™</sup> wholesale products and services are designed to help enable the flexibility, scalability and responsiveness that Australian businesses need to enable future success in their transformation endeavours.

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