

THE STATE OF MICROSOFT-POWERED IT

Survey Results
September 2026



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The research takeaway: for most organizations, digital transformation is well underway, but new and familiar barriers have emerged in the process. Today's IT leaders are prioritizing technology's impact over increasing cloud, AI, and Microsoft technology.

Eighty-six percent of our survey respondents report an established or higher level of transformation maturity, meaning that advanced cloud operations are delivering value, governed, and/or scaled and optimized. But for many, legacy dependencies present substantial barriers to adoption or implementation of cloud and AI technologies (41%), along with budget (35%) and staffing (29%) constraints that limit organizations' ability to add or implement new resources.

With these barriers in mind, leaders are focused on making the technology they have deliver more value. Technology value/optimization is a top near-term priority for the largest portion of survey respondents (22%); simplified operations and greater business agility are the most commonly expected outcomes of that effort (34% each); and automation is the capability respondents most often say would improve technology value and performance (20%).

Meanwhile, AI represents the next investment frontier rather than the entire transformation agenda. Despite widespread public discussions around the importance of AI adoption, just 20% name AI, Copilot, and data as their greatest near-term priority; 24% expect their investments to deliver accelerated AI adoption; and 21% expect to increase investment over current levels to foster that outcome.

WHO DID WE SURVEY?

Between July and August 2026, Gatepoint Research conducted a survey themed *The State of Microsoft-Powered IT*. Leaders from several industries were invited. 100 IT and procurement decision-makers have participated to date.

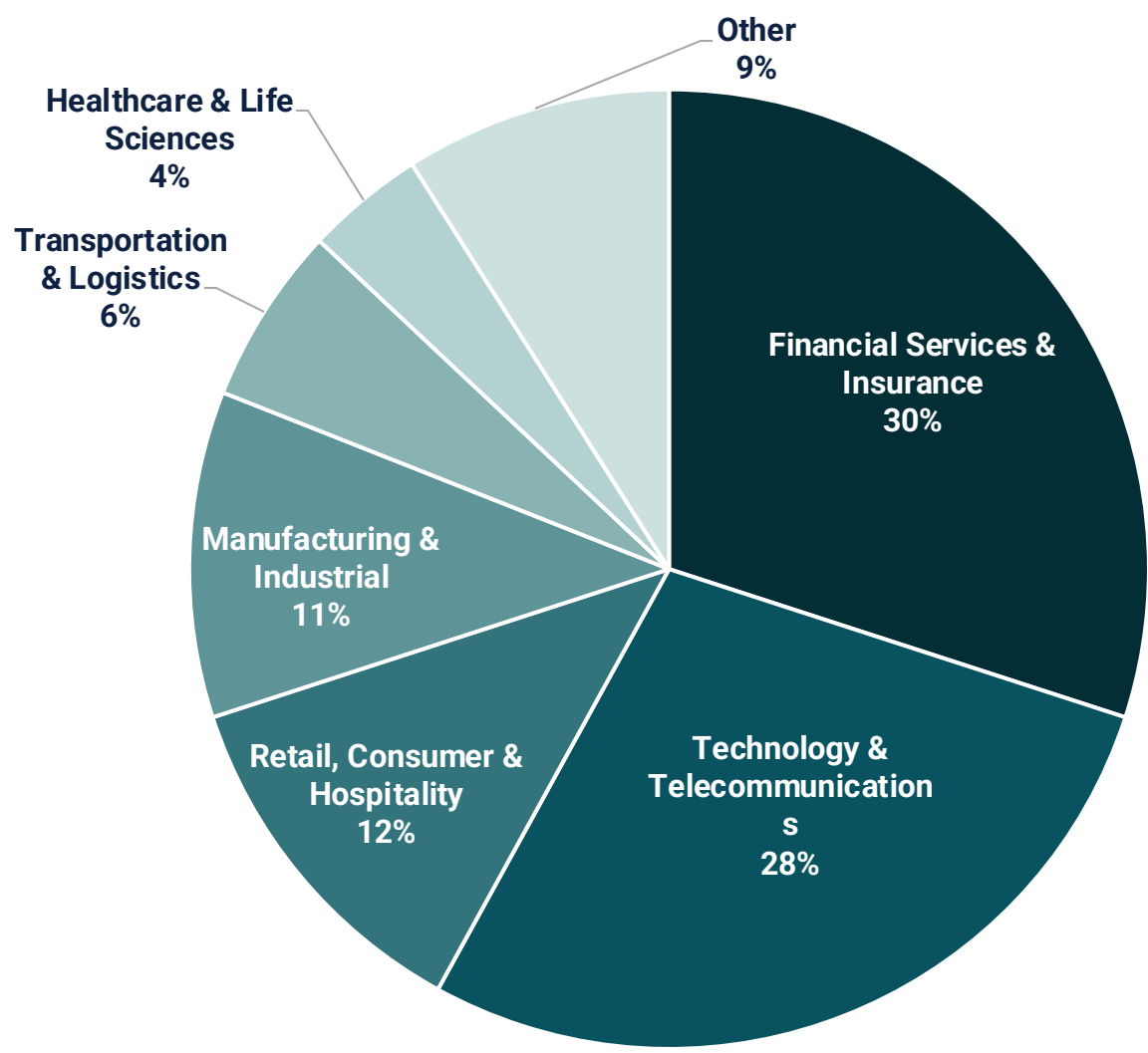
The respondent base includes 21% CxOs, 26% vice presidents, and 53% directors.

Half (50%) of respondents represent organizations with estimated annual revenue of \$1 billion or more, while another 38% fall into the \$500 million–\$999 million range.



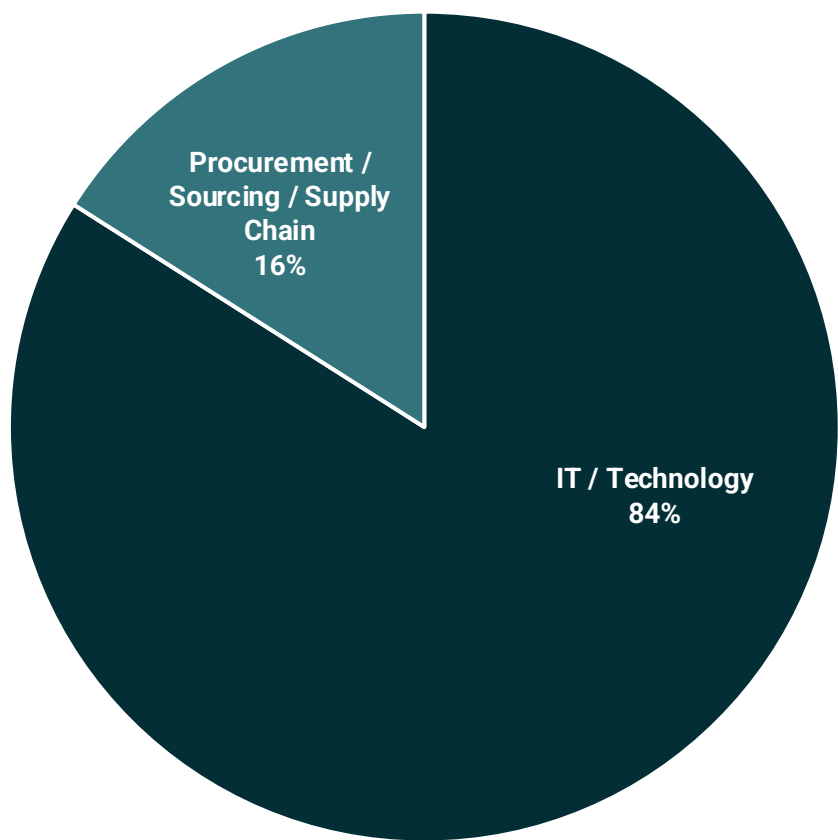
INDUSTRY PROFILE

Participants represent a diverse mix of industries. Financial services and insurance, combined with technology and telecommunications, account for 58%, but the remaining 42% spans consumer, hospitality, manufacturing, transportation, healthcare, energy, media, real estate, and other sectors.

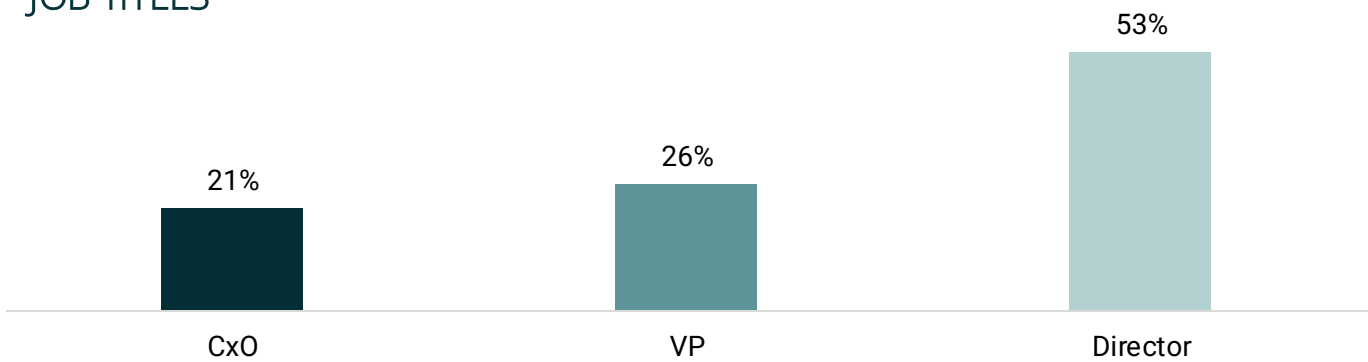


RESPONDENT PROFILE

Respondents include senior IT, technology, and procurement leaders, including CIOs, CTOs, CISOs, IT directors and vice presidents, and senior procurement and sourcing executives.



JOB TITLES





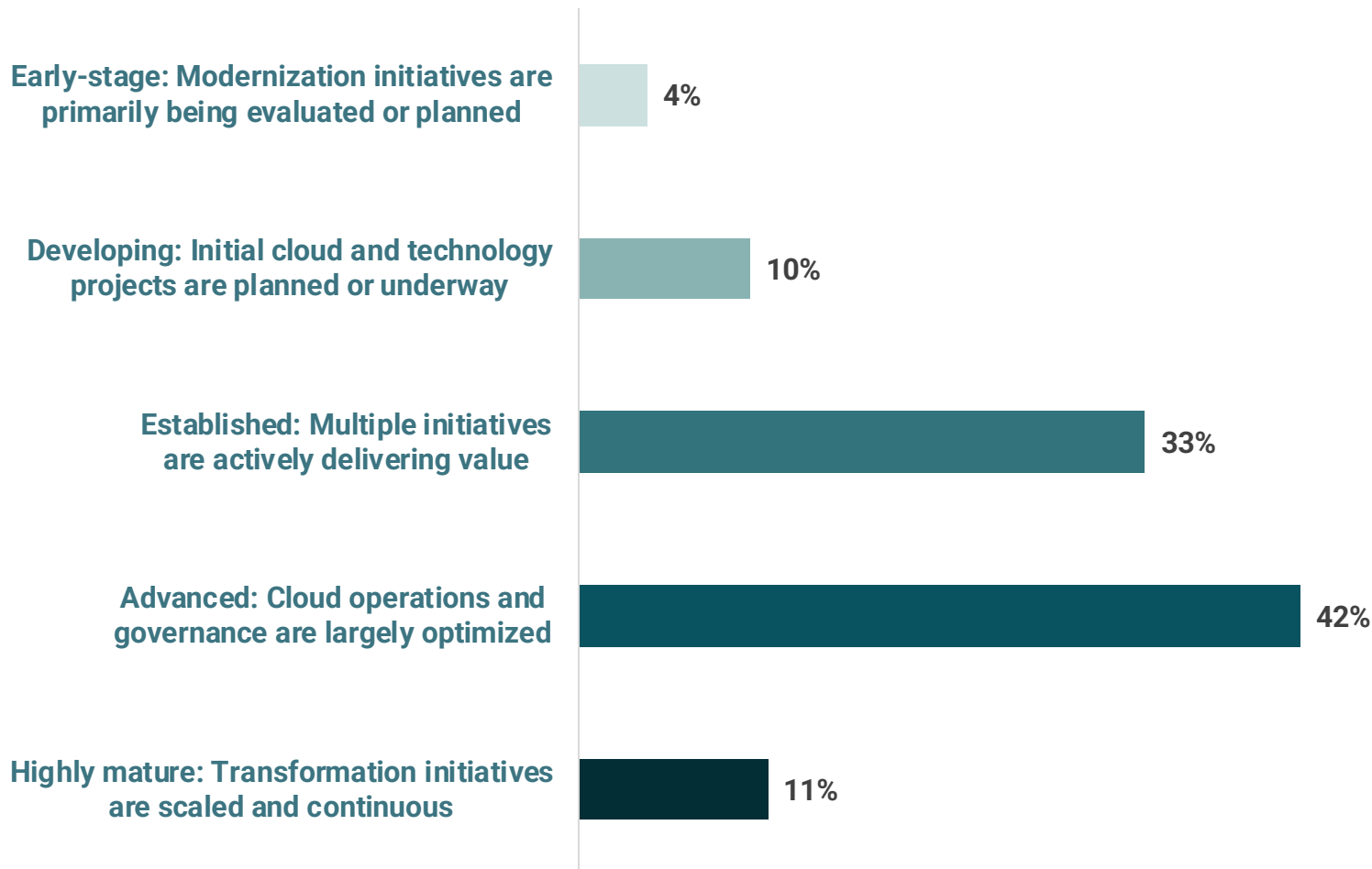
Survey Results

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TRANSFORMATION MATURITY

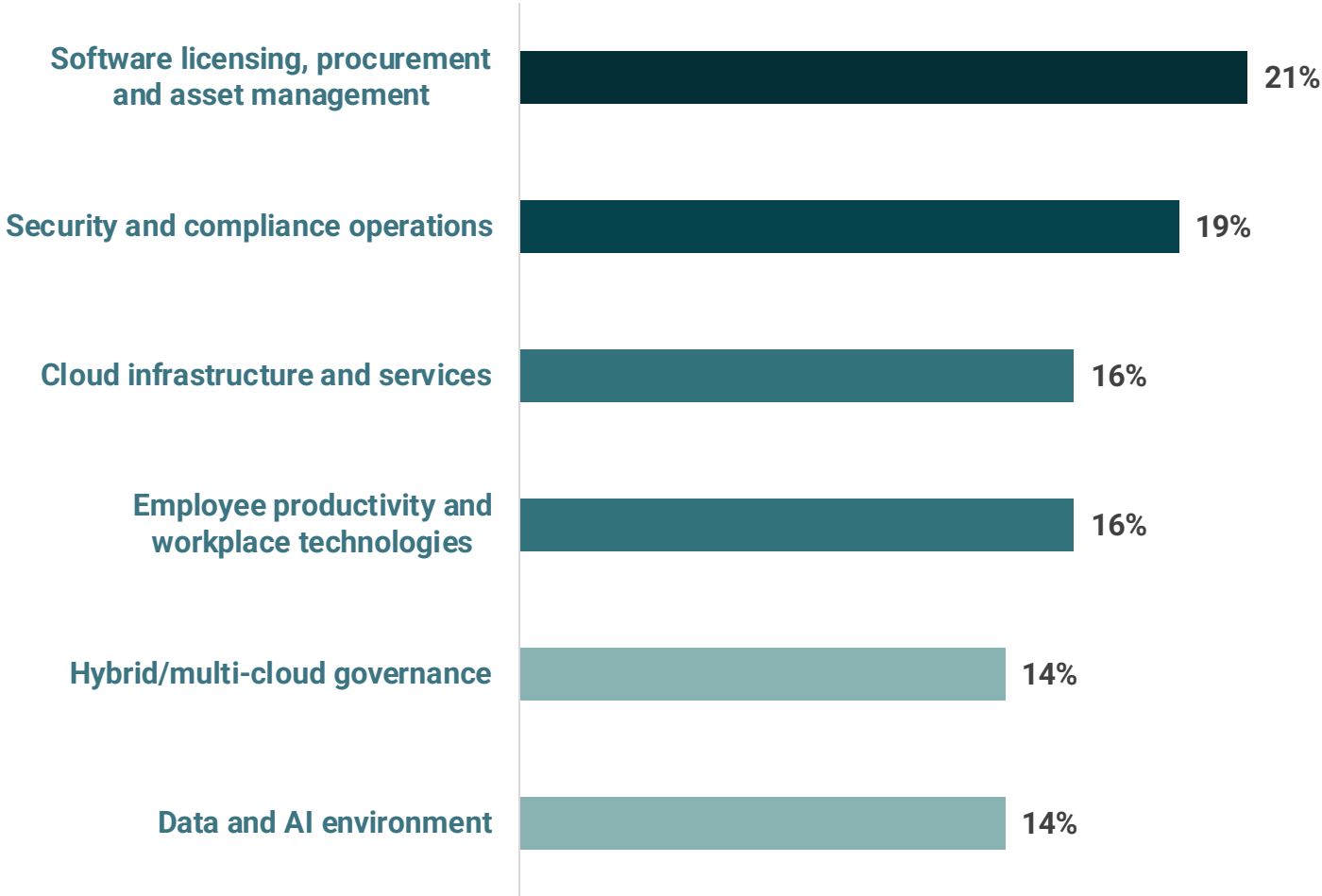
How would you describe your organization's current cloud and technology transformation maturity?



Eighty-six percent of respondents describe their organizations as established, advanced or highly mature, including 53% that characterize themselves as advanced or highly mature. Only 14% remain in the early-stage or developing categories.

MOST DIFFICULT AREA OF IT

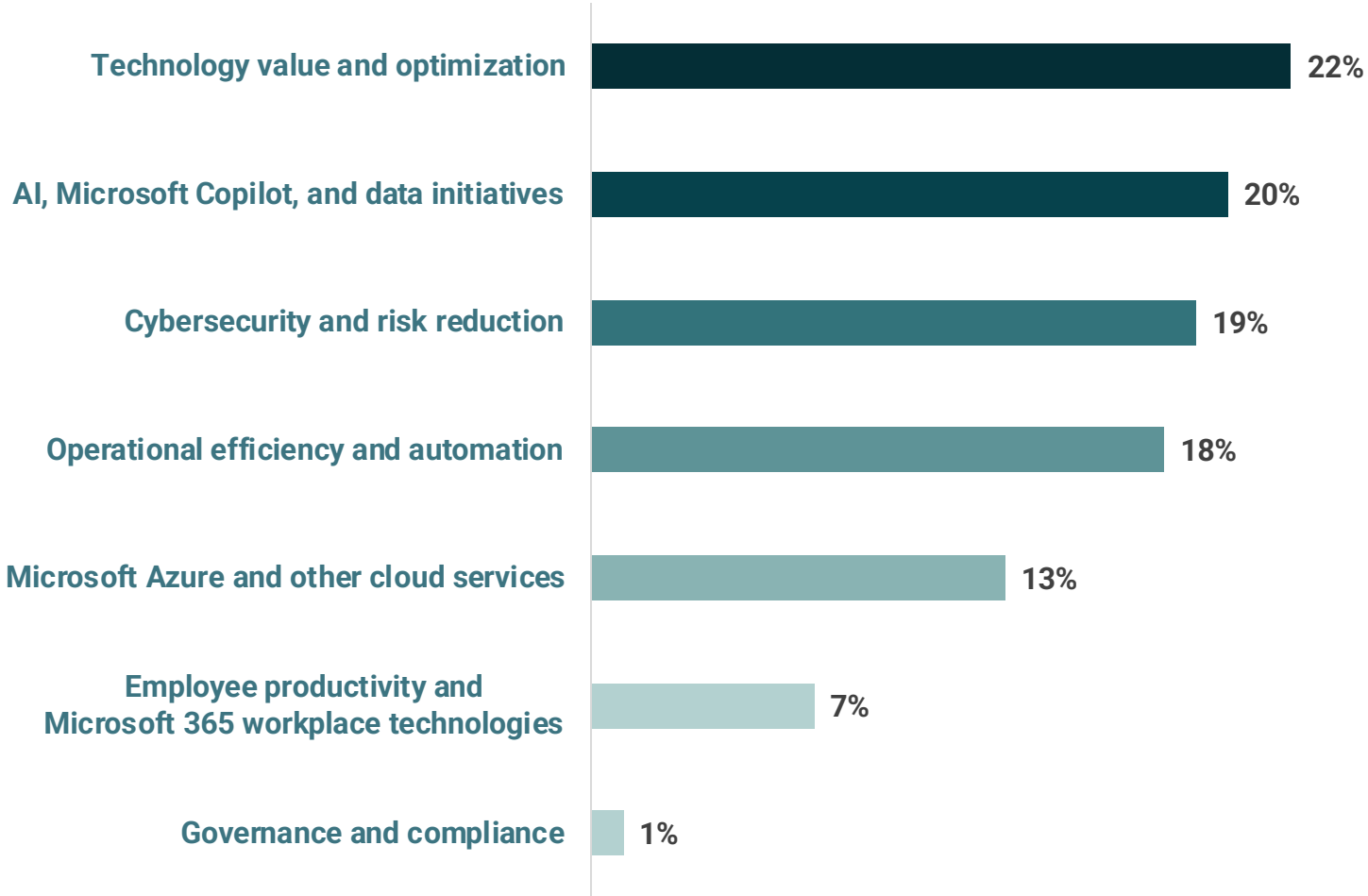
Which area of your IT environment is currently the most difficult to manage efficiently?



Even mature IT organizations struggle to manage multiple dimensions of their environments efficiently. The relatively even distribution of these results suggests management complexity is systemic rather than confined to one technology domain.

TECHNOLOGY PRIORITIES

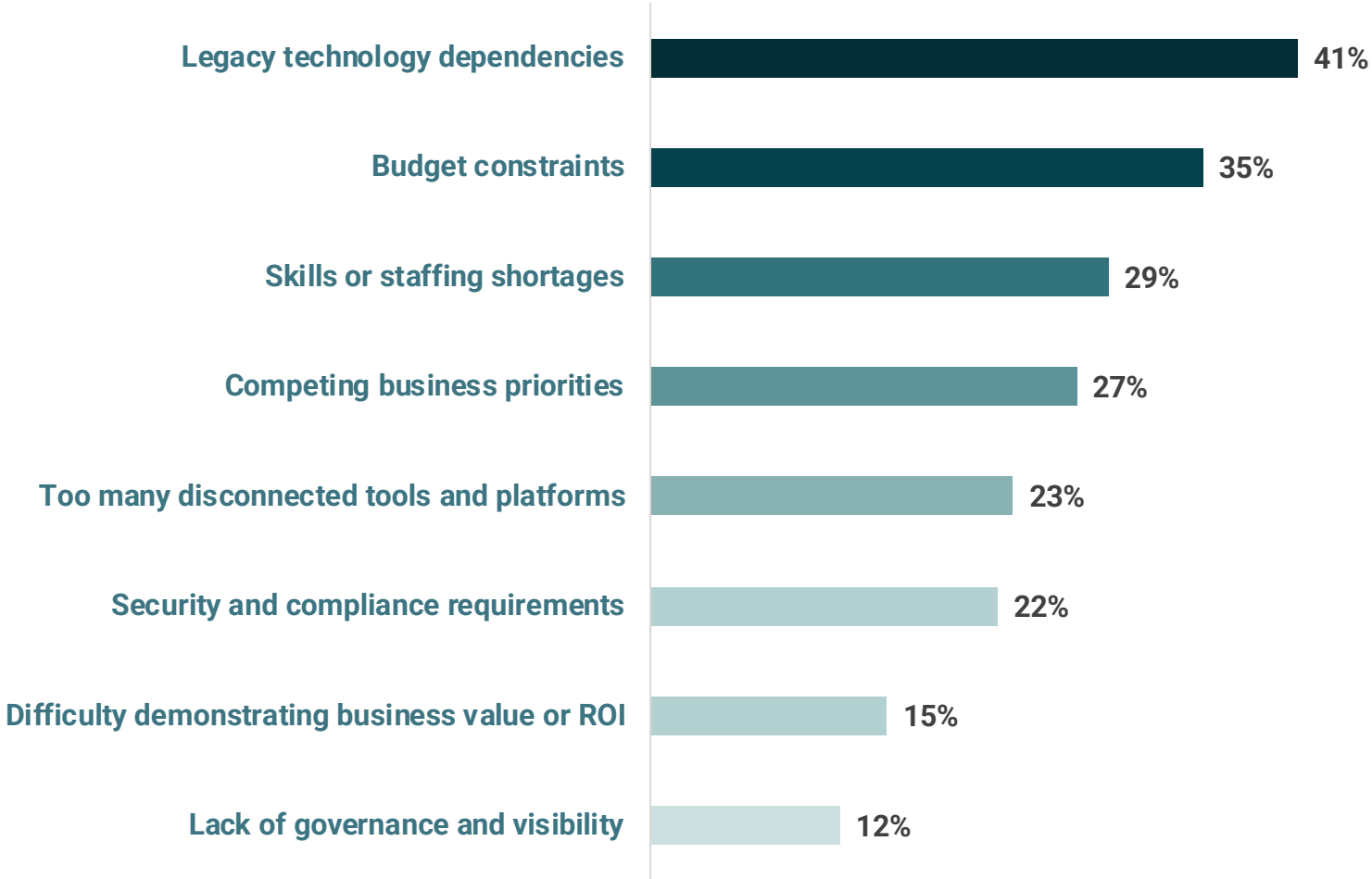
Which technology priorities will receive the greatest focus from your organization over the next 6 to 12 months?



The top priority is technology value and optimization (22%), followed closely by AI/Copilot/data (20%), cybersecurity and risk reduction (19%), and operational efficiency and automation (18%). Azure and other cloud services receive 13%, while workplace technology and governance rank considerably lower.

IT INITIATIVE OBSTACLES

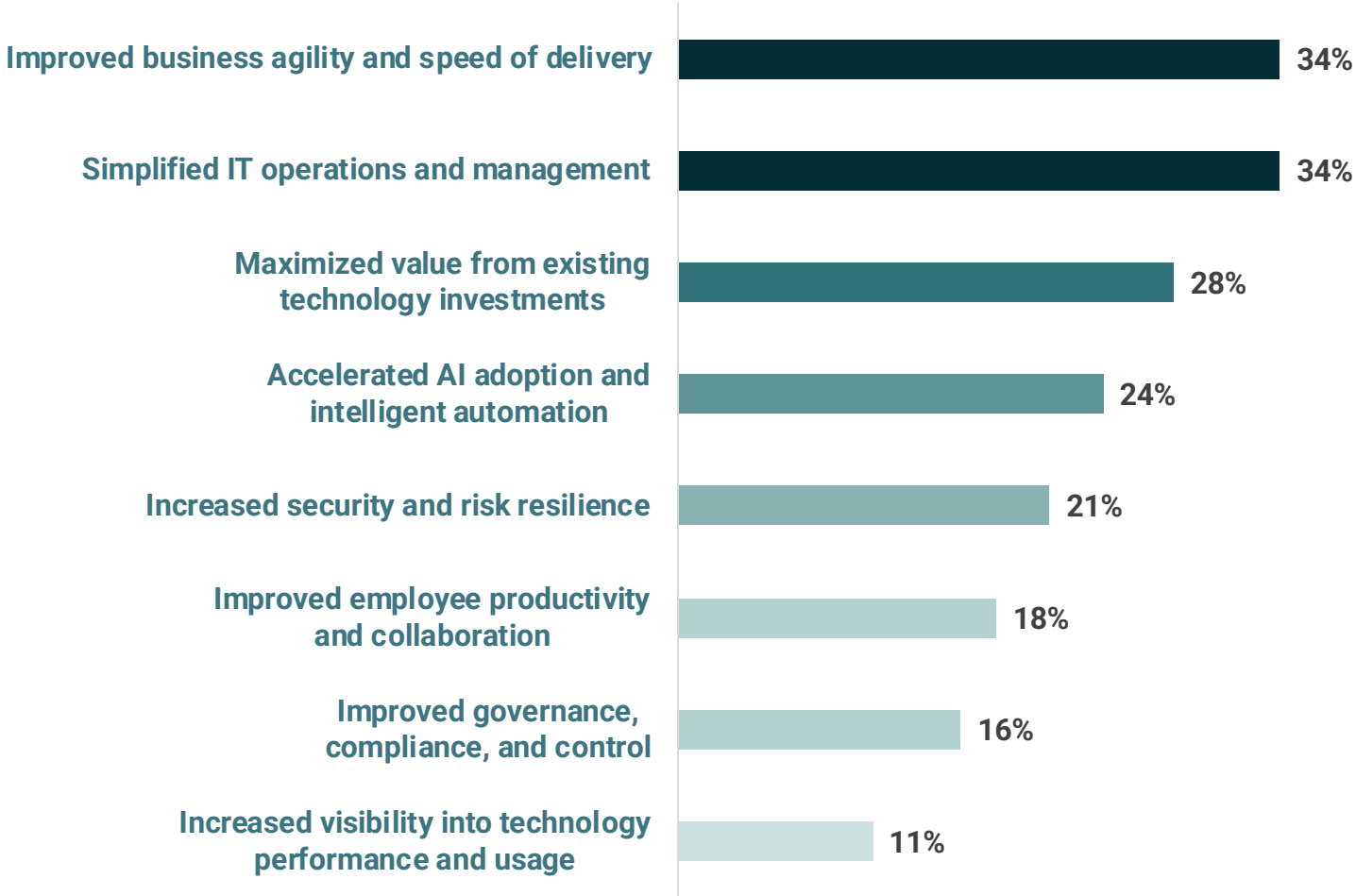
What are your biggest obstacles to executing IT initiatives as effectively or quickly as planned?



Organizations may be mature in their transformation journeys, but they haven't escaped their technology past. Despite 86% having reached established maturity or above, dependency on legacy technology is still the top obstacle to executing initiatives. Budget constraints (35%), staffing issues (29%) and competing priorities (27%) compound the problem.

INVESTMENT OUTCOMES

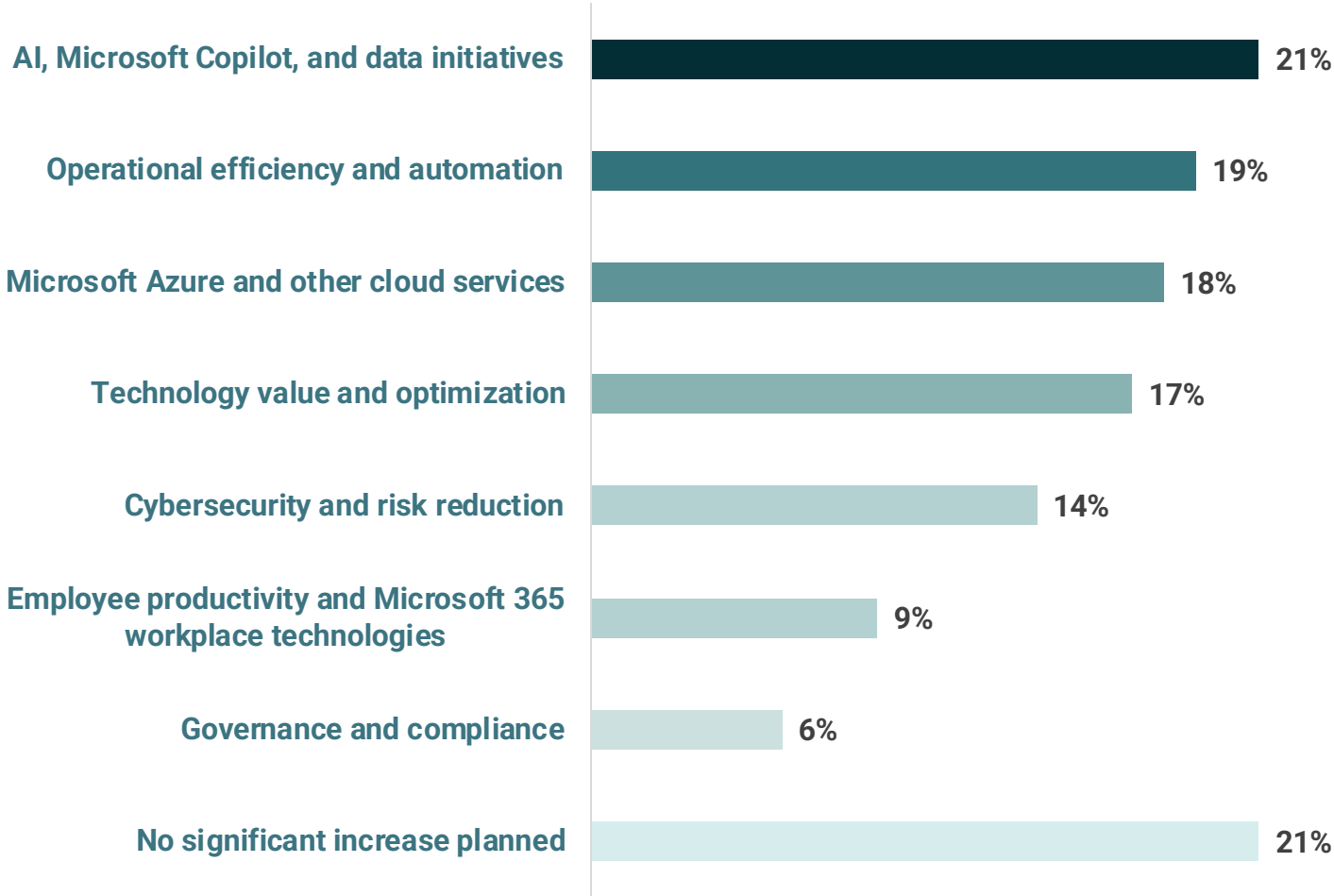
What outcomes are you expected to deliver from your technology investments in the next year?



Respondents want technology to make the organization faster and IT itself easier to manage. Two outcomes tie for first at 34%: improved business agility and speed of delivery, and simplified IT operations and management. Maximizing value from existing investments follows at 28%, with accelerated AI adoption at 24%.

INVESTMENT DIRECTION

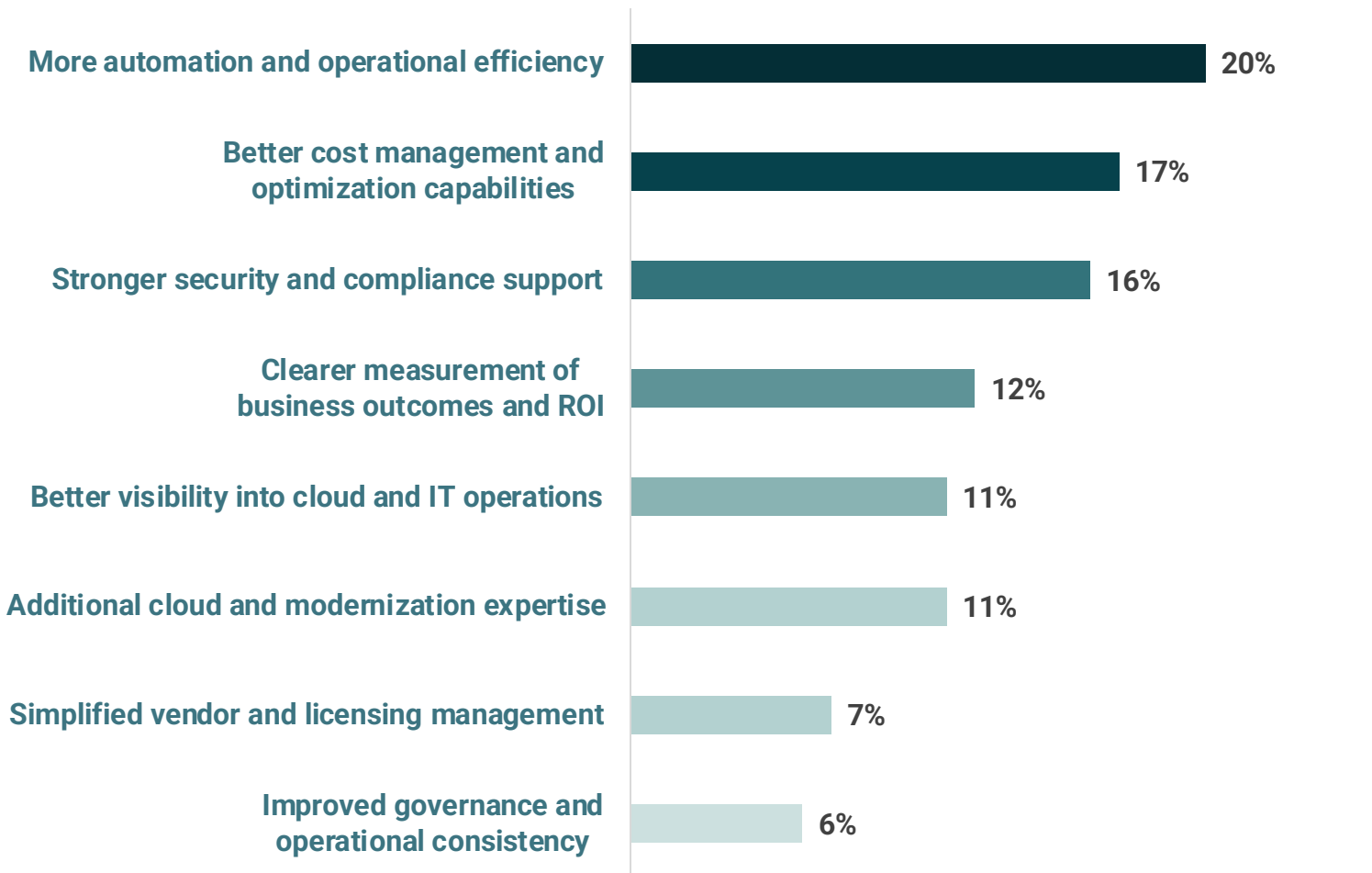
Where do you expect to increase investment over the next 12 months?



AI, Microsoft Copilot, and data initiatives rank highest among areas targeted for increased investment, at 21%, followed by operational efficiency/automation (19%) and Azure/cloud (18%). Technology optimization follows at 17%. At the same time, 21% expect no significant increase in technology investment. Technology priorities aren't automatically translating into larger budgets.

IMPROVING VALUE & PERFORMANCE

What would most help your organization improve the value and performance of technology investments?



More automation and operational efficiency ranks first at 20%, followed by better cost management and optimization at 17% and stronger security and compliance support at 16%. No single solution dominates.



ABOUT THE COMPANY

SoftwareOne is a global Microsoft partner and leading provider of cloud, licensing, and technology services, helping organizations maximize the value of their Microsoft Azure, Microsoft 365, and Copilot investments. Through advisory, optimization, and managed services, SoftwareOne supports enterprises in navigating cloud complexity, improving operational efficiency, and driving greater value from their technology environments.

[Learn more at softwareone.com.](https://softwareone.com)

The logo features the words "PULSE" and "REPORT" in a large, bold, dark blue sans-serif font. A teal-colored line graph, resembling a pulse or ECG, is superimposed over the text, starting at the baseline of "PULSE", rising to a peak, falling to a trough, and rising again to a second peak before ending at the baseline of "REPORT". Above the right portion of the teal line, the words "GATEPOINT RESEARCH" are written in a smaller, bold, blue sans-serif font.

PULSE *GATEPOINT RESEARCH* **REPORT**

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