



Survey Conducted at 2008 Interop New York
September 17-18, 2008

***Audience: Network Engineers, Systems Administrators, IT
Managers and Directors***

Trends: 2008 Interop New York Survey

For the second year in a row at Interop NY, we asked IT professionals involved in systems, network and application management about the issues they thought were important, what challenges they faced and where they were spending their time and money. We thought of it as taking a quick pulse of the industry and certainly New York during one of the worst weeks for the stock market in near-term US history was an interesting time to be doing this. Where applicable, we include last year's numbers for comparison and to show rudimentary trending which we'll build in the years to come.

Summary

Overall, we saw much more correlation this year between what IT said was important and what they spent their time and money against. In a tightening economy, IT professionals are being practical and aligning themselves with the IT projects that are actually achievable with today's priorities.

- Reducing management costs was the biggest mover on the "top challenges" list showing that budget is much more of a factor in decision making this year than last
- "Practical" and achievable projects like Security Information Management and delivering complete IT Asset Management and Inventory top the list of IT projects – in importance and in implementations
- At the bottom of the list, huge projects like ITIL/CMDB, IPv6 and Cloud Computing, requiring major investments in time and money and often cultural shifts for the entire organization.

Key Findings

- 1) On a scale of 1-5 (1 being not important and 5 being very important), how important are the following issues to your team?**
- 2) For the following IT solutions and issues, please indicate whether/when your organization is planning on implementing them.**

VIRTUALIZATION MANGAGEMENT

1. 63% say that virtualization management is important to their operations (down from 75%). Of that, 26% rank it as **very** important to their operations (down from 39%).
2. 27% already have tools in place for virtualization management, (down from 35%). 39% plan to implement this technology by next year (down from 48%).

What does this mean?

From the numbers, it looks like the push to virtualize has cooled off. On the one hand, you would think that benefits like cost savings from server virtualization would be top of mind but in fact more practical concerns like having a complete IT Asset Management/Inventory and Security Information Management took precedence in terms of importance and what IT projects actually got done. We wonder as well, whether the imminent entry of Microsoft Hyper-V (announced for a very long time) had a hand in delaying decisions to move forward with alternate virtualization solutions – i.e., VMware's dominant ESX hypervisor and VirtualCenter management tools.

HIGH AVAILABILITY/DISASTER RECOVERY (HA/DR)

1. Second on the list when it came to important IT issues. 85% of respondents rated high availability/disaster recovery important to their businesses.
2. And apparently it's where IT spent their resources: 65% of respondents report they currently have tools in place to provide high availability and disaster recovery solutions, with another 26% saying they plan to implement in the next year.

What does this mean?

We would expect this issue to rate very high with Financial Services IT folk, but traditionally they represent only about one-fifth of the survey group. So what can explain this high rating coupled with high deployment? As we've seen from our own customers, SLA's are not just for service providers anymore. More and more enterprise IT groups are acting like service providers to internal constituencies with all that means in terms of measuring and delivering high quality service performance and availability. And that high deployment number must have gotten a boost from virtualization adoption as well – which, when configured and managed correctly, can provide an easier HA/DR solution that the rest of us can afford.

ITIL/CMDB

1. ITIL is not a priority for respondents with over 60% citing it as middle to low importance.
2. 33% are planning to implement some form of solution by next year (down from 38%). 54% had no plans to implement or didn't know (up from 54%). Only 12% actually had tools in place to support this (down from 14%).

What does this mean?

Despite the ITIL V3 refresh this year, the ITIL/CMDB movement has definitely been overshadowed by virtualization and the burgeoning cloud computing debate – particularly in the enterprise space where adoption and planned adoption numbers are way down.

IT ASSET MANAGEMENT/INVENTORY

1. IT Asset Management/Inventory is important to 72% (down from 82%) of those surveyed, down from 82% last year. Of that, 38% rank it as **very** important to their operations (down from 55%).
2. 51% already have tools in place for IT Asset Management/Inventory, (up from 36%) and another 34% (down from 50%) planning to implement by next year.

What does this mean?

The relative importance of this “unsexy” issue is a nice breath of practical fresh air. And unlike last year, IT organizations have been getting their houses in order with a big gain in IT Asset Management/Inventory implementations. Of course, one of the first steps in implementing virtualization is understanding what you already have, so that also might have been a factor here.

SECURITY INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

1. 92% say that security information management is important to their operations (up from 83%).
2. A whopping 68% of respondents had tools in place this year to secure information, up from only a third last year with an additional 27% planning to get their solutions in place by next year.

What does this mean?

What a difference a year makes. Like we saw with IT Asset Management/Inventory, IT orgs in were focused on information security this year, making that topic both top of mind and top of actual deployments.

IPV6

1. IPv6 is still not a priority with only 65% of respondents citing it as a middle to low priority this year (down from 73%).
2. Of those, only 11% (up from 8%) have tools to support IPV6 in place, with another 28% having plans to implement next year.

What does this mean?

IPv6 adoption is still not a comer – with the Federal Government’s June 2008 mandate for federal agencies to be IPv6-compliant having little effect on government IT and even less on industry.

CLOUD COMPUTING

1. 39% of respondents say that cloud computing is an important issue in IT operations, placing it near the bottom of the list.
2. And not surprisingly, only 11% have cloud computing solutions in place while a full third of respondents have no plans to implement at all.

What does this mean?

It’s early days for cloud computing – not just from a practical standpoint of deployment but even from defining what it is. Even 11% seems like a high adoption rate but perhaps explained by the relatively high number of financial services IT folk – traditionally at the forefront of technological change – represented at this show and in the survey responses.

GREEN IT

1. 54% of respondents say that Green IT is important.
2. But only 5% actually have Green IT solutions in place – putting it at the bottom of the list for actual deployments.

What does this mean?

Despite the hype and the expensive IBM commercials, Green IT remains a relatively low priority for IT. In a case of putting your money where your mouth is, this topic does not rate.

3) The top challenge facing my IT department is:

1. Supporting new technologies/enabling innovation (22%)
2. Reducing management costs (21%)
3. Improving service levels (20%)
4. Boosting staff productivity (16%)
5. Deploying virtualization (12%)
6. Meeting compliance requirements (5%)
7. Other (4%)

vs the 2007 survey results:

1. Improving service levels (29%)
2. Supporting new technologies/enabling innovation (22%)
3. Boosting staff productivity (17%)
4. Meeting compliance requirements (15%)
5. Reducing management costs (11%)
6. Deploying virtualization (5%)
7. Other (1%)

Biggest increase in Top Challenge – not so surprising given the economic climate but perhaps also indicative of management complexity for new technologies and the rising costs associated with that

4) What industry category best describes your organization?

1. Financial Services (19%)
2. Government Civilian (15%)
3. Academic (10%)
4. IT/Consulting Services (9%)
5. Defense (8%)
6. Telecommunications (6%)
7. Healthcare (6%)
8. Media (6%)
9. Research & Development (4%)
10. IT Computing/Network products (3%)
11. Manufacturing (1%)
12. Retail distribution/Consumer products (1%)
13. Other (11%)