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# Hybrid Cloud Automation Accelerates Digital Transformation

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FORRESTER OPPORTUNITY SNAPSHOT: A CUSTOM STUDY COMMISSIONED BY IBM | APRIL 2020

## Implementing A Hybrid Cloud Strategy Requires An Agile Mindset

Cloud is no longer a tactical solution but a strategic way for enterprises to quickly adapt to rapidly changing business needs. IT leaders must orchestrate a hybrid cloud environment that links employees, customers, partners, vendors, and devices to meet increasingly demanding customer needs. To learn more about hybrid cloud implementation, Forrester Consulting fielded a custom survey across IT infrastructure decision makers in the United States.

Eighty-seven percent of decision makers are prioritizing upgrading data center compute infrastructure while 85% report their firms are implementing DevOps. These teams must decide where to best run applications based on workload requirements such as security and data locality. This requires development teams to have access to platforms that improve productivity and support innovation while being reliable and secure.

### Key Findings



Hybrid cloud implementation is maturing: Enterprises plan to migrate increasingly sensitive workloads in the coming year.



Security and compliance are still challenging: Nearly 90% of respondents cite managing security best practices, vulnerability management, and compliance as challenging.



Automated management helps: Automation drives faster updates, more efficient use of IT infrastructure, and easier compliance and control of resources. This ultimately leads to greater ROI and reduced operating expenses.

## In Upgrading And Modernizing Infrastructure, Enterprises Increase Agility

As companies work to transform their businesses over the next 12 months, they are prioritizing several technology initiatives:

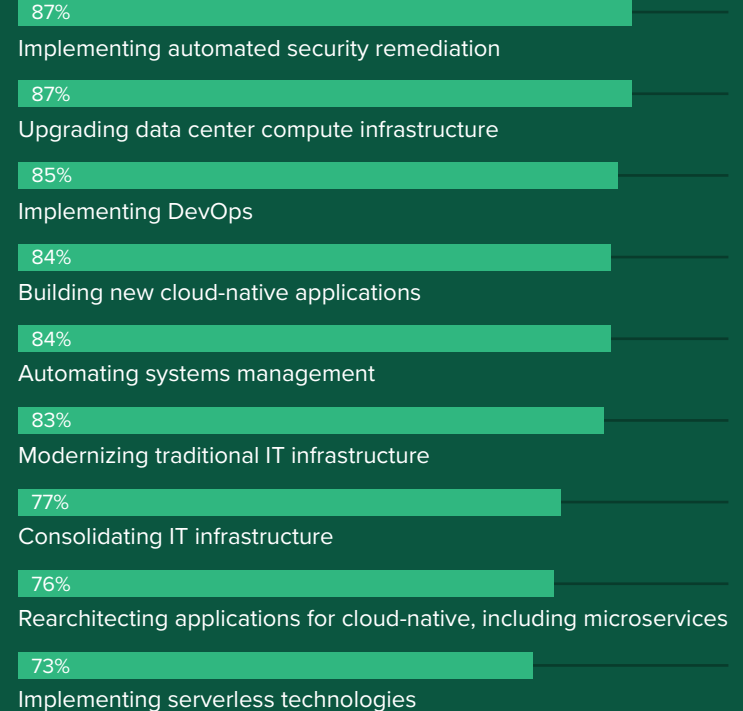
Most decision makers report their top initiatives for the coming year are automated security (87%), data center upgrades (87%), and implementing DevOps (85%).

Eighty-four percent are building new cloud-native applications, and 76% plan to rearchitect applications for cloud-native including microservices.

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## How is your organization prioritizing each of the following technology initiatives over the next 12 months?

● High/Critical priority



Base: 111 US IT infrastructure decision makers  
Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of IBM, February 2020

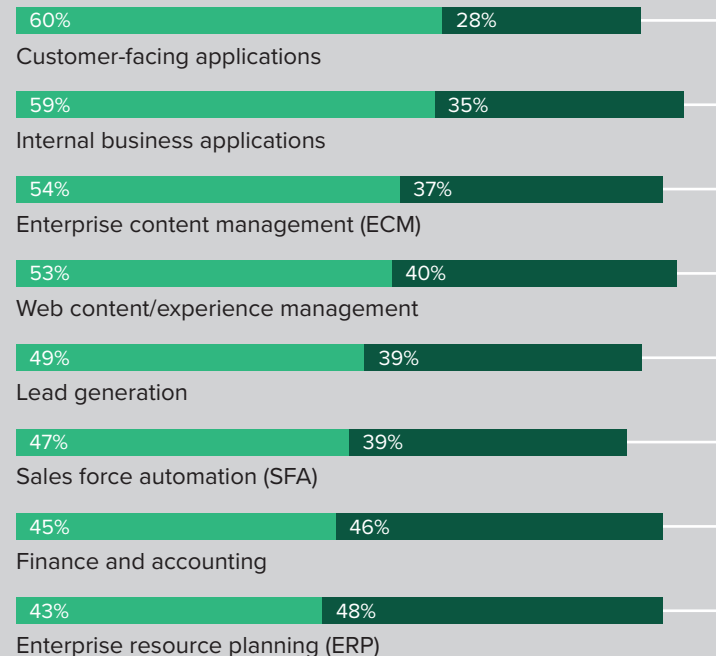
## Hybrid Cloud Strategy Implementation Is Critical To This Transformation

Implementation of a hybrid cloud strategy across multiple workloads continues as more than half of decision makers report their firms are currently using the cloud or migrating workloads to the cloud for customer-facing applications, internal business applications such as financial modeling and inventory, enterprise content management, and web content.

Looking forward, nearly half of respondents plan to migrate more mission-critical applications to the cloud, including finance and accounting, enterprise resource planning, and human resource management.

### Which of the following best describes your organization's cloud migration plan for each of the workloads below?

- Currently migrating to or using cloud for the workload
- Plan to migrate to or plan to use cloud for the workload



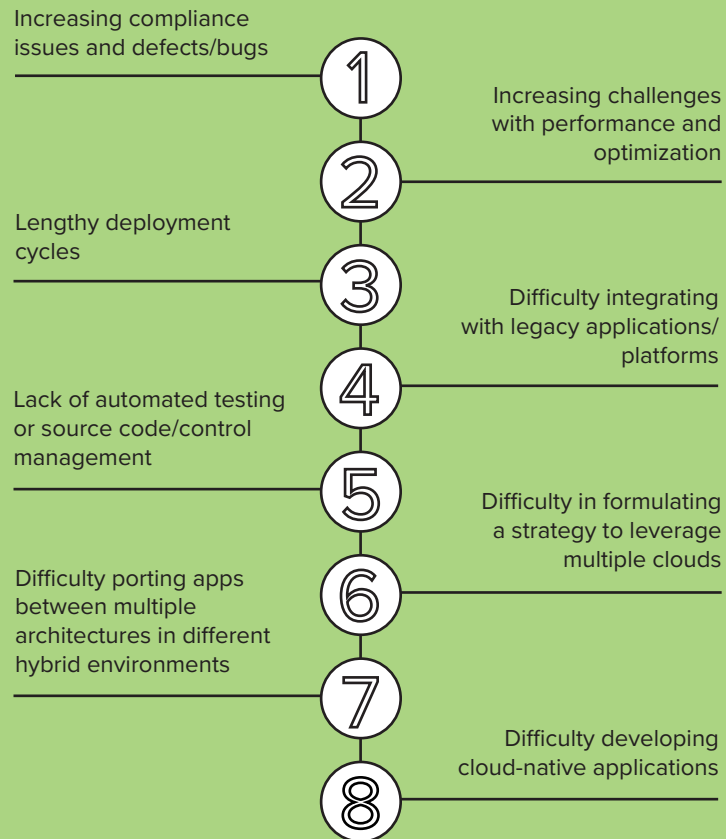
## However, Firms Face Challenges With Their Hybrid Cloud Strategies

Topping the list of challenges are issues around compliance and security. Eighty-six percent of IT leaders report compliance is very challenging. Nearly 90% of decision makers say their companies struggle with managing security best practices when transitioning to microservices. In addition, 87% of respondents say their firms face challenges as they track and remediate security vulnerabilities at the application or operating system level.

Additionally, challenges around performance, integration, and porting apps between multiple architectures are also obstacles with which IT leaders grapple.

Finally, lengthy deployment cycles and a lack of automated testing or code management create obstacles for enterprises.

## Top Challenges With Hybrid Cloud Strategy



## Difficulty Moving Applications Around Hybrid Clouds

A little over a third (36%) of decision makers find it easy to move applications around their hybrid clouds, while the remainder experience some degree of difficulty.

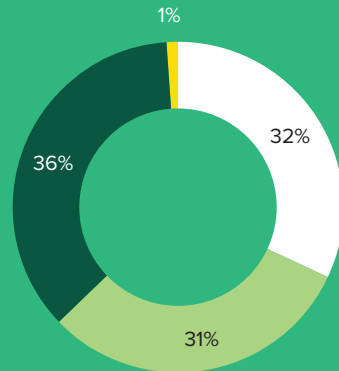
Security concerns are the most cited reason for difficulty. In addition, 43% of respondents face inconsistency in architecture between on-premises and the cloud. Legacy apps drive some of this difficulty as 37% of companies are unable to run legacy apps in the cloud, and more than 25% struggle with the lack of integration with legacy apps. One in five respondents reports data gravity concerns as firms try to move applications across hybrid clouds.



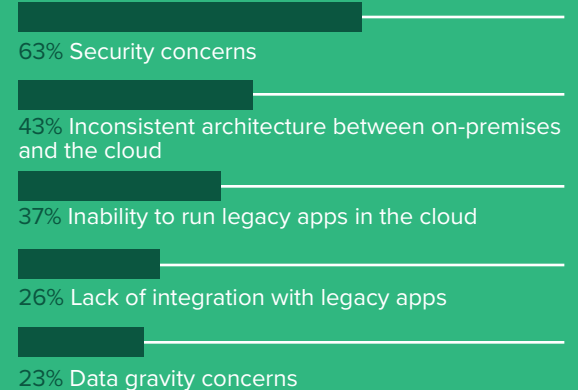
**32% of enterprises find it difficult to move applications around their hybrid clouds.**

How easy or difficult is it for your organization to move applications around your hybrid clouds?

- Difficult
- Neither easy nor difficult
- Easy
- Don't know/does not apply



Why is it difficult for your organization to move applications around your hybrid clouds?\*



## Automated Hybrid Cloud Management Drives Benefits

To overcome challenges around hybrid cloud migration, many enterprises turn to automated hybrid cloud management systems. Those that do realize significant technical and business benefits.

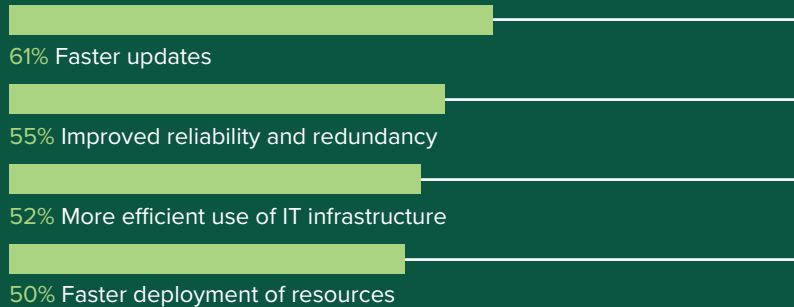
Half or more of respondents whose firms have automated cloud management systems report faster updates, improved reliability and redundancy, more efficient use of IT infrastructure, and faster resource deployment. In addition, 43% of those with automated hybrid cloud management report easier compliance and control of resources.

These management tools also drive clear benefits to the business with 57% of decision makers reporting faster time-to-value, 51% seeing improved customer experience, and 45% realizing greater ROI.



**Two in five leaders report reduced operational costs and greater ROI with automated hybrid cloud management systems.**

### Technical benefits realized



### Business benefits realized



## Conclusion

The world is hybrid. Digital transformation requires taking advantage of the agility and flexibility of the public cloud while, at the same time, integrating with critical systems of record on-premises. All of this must be done with a focus on security and compliance.

- Businesses are increasingly moving traditional on-premises workloads to the cloud, such as customer-facing and internal applications. At the same time, they must meet existing regulatory and security compliance needs.
- While recognizing the power of the public cloud, they realize they must consider architecture, analytics, and data gravity constraints as part of deciding where to place workloads.
- Leveraging automation amplifies the ease of hybrid cloud management. It not only yields expected technical benefits but business benefits as well.

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### **Contributing Research:**

Forrester's Infrastructure & Operations  
research group



## Methodology

This Opportunity Snapshot was commissioned by IBM. To create this profile, Forrester Consulting supplemented this research with custom survey questions asked of IT infrastructure decision makers in the US. The custom survey began and was completed in February 2020.

## Related Research

[“The Key To Enterprise Hybrid Multicloud Strategy,” a commissioned study by Forrester Consulting on behalf of IBM, January 10, 2020](#)

“Cloud Powers The Modern Adaptive Enterprise,” Forrester Research, Inc., October 11, 2019

“Top 10 Facts Every Tech Leader Should Know About Hybrid Cloud,” Forrester Research, Inc., April 25, 2018

“Hybrid Cloud Security Best Practices,” Forrester Research, Inc., June 20, 2019

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## US Demographics

### NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

51% 1,000-4,999

30% 5,000-19,999

19% 20,000 or more

### RESPONDENT JOB LEVEL

18% C-level executive

35% Vice president

47% Director

### IT ACTIVITIES

77% Infrastructure & ops

64% Application mgmt. & maintenance

62% Software/application development

### INFRASTRUCTURE RESPONSIBILITY

74% Final decision maker

23% Part of team making decisions

3% Influence decisions



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