

Cloud-Centric Modernization: Exploring the Pain-Points and the Promise

Cloud is expected to play a central role in IT modernization efforts across government, which is both logical and daunting. On one hand, agencies have done extensive work with the cloud in recent years and so they have a good understanding of what is entailed. On the other hand, with IT modernization, agencies are expected to adopt cloud on a whole new scale, creating a cloud-centric IT enterprise.

But the shift to cloud and modernizing legacy systems isn't always smooth sailing. To better understand how government is leveraging cloud, the challenges agencies face, and benefits, GovLoop surveyed the federal government community. Below are the results of 92 survey responses.

There are still challenges involved with a more concerted push to the cloud and modernization, but the benefits are realized

Diving right in, we discovered that there are still significant obstacles for agencies in terms of modernization. When asked, "What is your agency's biggest pain point when it comes to modernization?" 27 percent of respondents cited "Lack of dedicated modernization budget"; 19 percent attributed it to "Lack of resources/talent"; and 15 percent said they simply didn't know where to begin. (See Figure 1)

But overcoming these challenges is worth it to survey respondents because they can see the ways that their agencies will benefit in the long-term. When asked "What does your agency see as the biggest benefit for modernization?" 43 percent cited their top benefit as "Improved efficiencies and increased productivity" and 13 percent cited "Improved collaboration between stakeholders." (See Figure 2)

Moving to the cloud is more important than ever before for collaboration, but prioritization is an issue

Though the benefits and possibilities of modernization are clear, moving potential to action seems to be an obstacle for agencies. When asked, "Is moving workloads to the cloud a priority for your agency?" only 14 percent said it was a high priority. (See Figure 3) Additionally, when asked, "On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate modernization efforts as a priority within your agency? (1 being it's a super low priority, 10 being the most important priority?)" the average answer fell in the medium-to-low priority range. (See Figure 4)

Figure 1

What is your agency's biggest pain point when it comes to modernization?



Figure 2

What does your agency see as the biggest benefit for modernization?

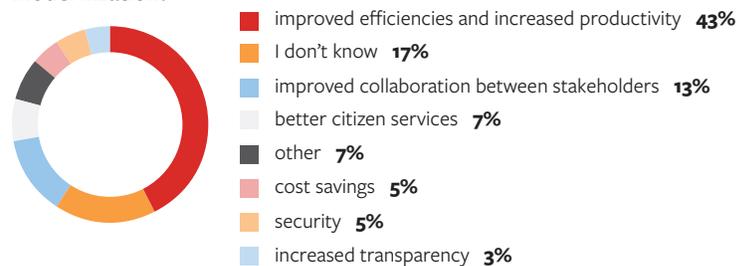


Figure 3

Is moving workloads to the cloud a priority for your agency?

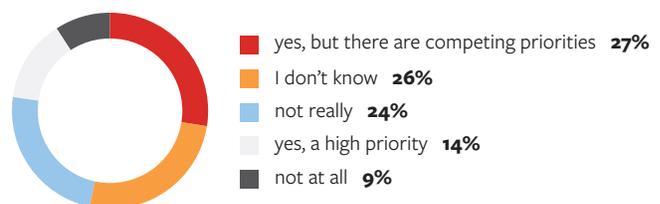
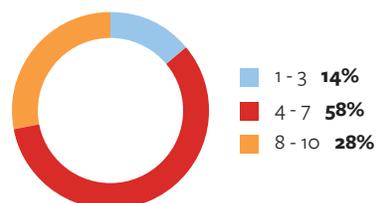


Figure 4

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate modernization efforts as a priority within your agency? (1 being it's a super low priority, 10 being the most important priority?)



Agencies need to move to prioritize cloud and modernization in their spheres, because currently, according to our survey, they are struggling with collaboration, having the right tools for collaboration, and creating an environment for agility and flexibility in creating better collaboration.

When asked, “On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your agency’s current ability to collaborate effectively? (1 being terrible and 10 being awesome)”, the answer was solidly average. (See Figure 5)

Then when asked, “Do you think your agency has the proper tools and processes to collaborate effectively?” only 28 percent believed they did. (See Figure 6)

And finally, when asked, “On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your agency’s flexibility and agility when it comes to collaborating? (1 being terrible, and 10 being awesome)”, the majority of respondents ranked themselves as average or below. (See Figure 7)

While these findings present some obstacles, they also present opportunities for modernization and the use of cloud. If agencies work to develop strategies for modernizing work processes and look to change how employees work and collaborate through cloud-based Unified Communications (UC) and related capabilities, they can overcome pitfalls in creating a more flexible IT environment.

Are artificial intelligence and Cloud Smart playing a role?

Finally, we asked survey respondents their opinions on artificial intelligence (AI) and the new “Cloud Smart” initiative, the new long-term, high-level strategy to drive cloud adoption in federal agencies, and where their agencies stood in use and adoption of both.

The results? Agencies are still learning about both, with the majority of respondents unsure if they were adopting either to move forward with modernization. (See Figures 8 and 9) This represents an enormous opportunity for education and learning around both of these areas for all involved.

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Figure 5

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your agency’s current ability to collaborate effectively? (1 being terrible and 10 being awesome)

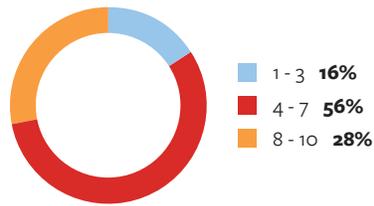


Figure 6

Do you think your agency has the proper tools and processes to collaborate effectively?

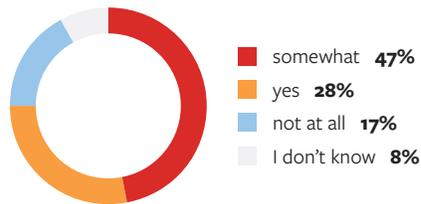


Figure 7

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your agency’s flexibility and agility when it comes to collaborating? (1 being terrible, and 10 being awesome)

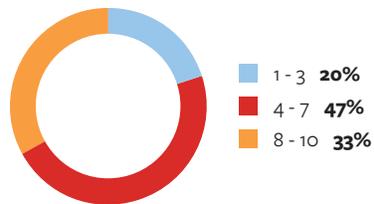


Figure 8

Do you plan on adopting the “Cloud Smart” initiative?

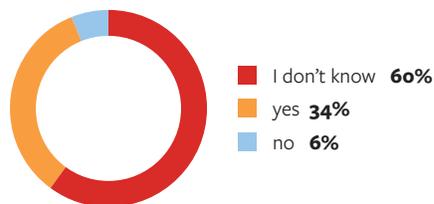


Figure 9

Is your agency exploring AI for improving workforce efficiency?

