

CRN - No remote concern

By Bob Tarzey, Analyst and Director, Quocirca Ltd

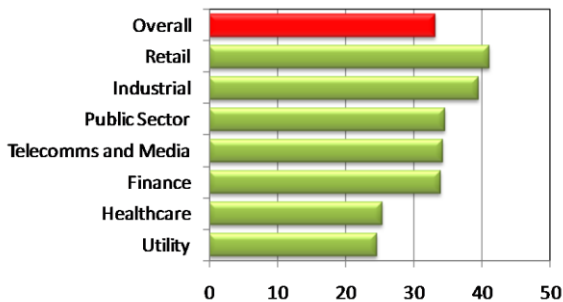
The average European business, if there is such a thing, has more employees who use IT than do not; around 65 per cent.

This reliance on IT is a challenge for those managing end-user devices because these are now distributed widely.

The average European business has 20 separate locations and around 20 per cent of its staff access IT remotely at some point during the week using a mobile device such as laptop or smartphone.

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Average number of physical locations



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It gets worse for the IT manager. Half of businesses now open their internal IT systems up in some way to outsiders: contractors, suppliers, partners, customers and the like.

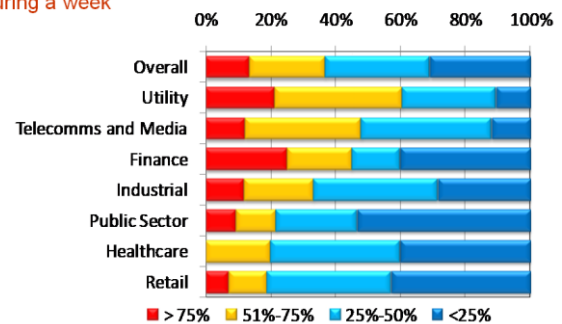
Mobility benefits only apply when everything is running. When systems fail, the situation is worse than having no IT, because there is no longer any manual way of running most business transactions.

The IT manager's lot is tough. No one appreciates them when all is running smoothly and they are devils incarnate when things go wrong.

Worse, with such distributed infrastructure, you can bet the IT manager will be in the wrong location at the wrong time when a problem needs fixing.

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Percentage of employees working remotely at some point during a week

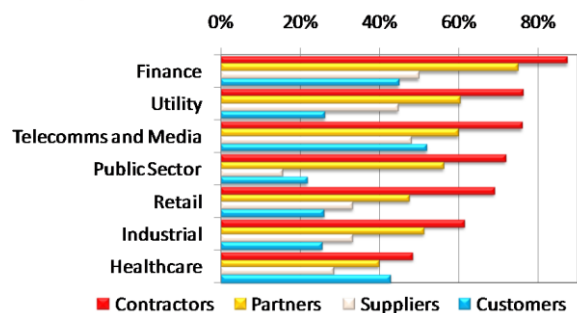


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Fortunately, system management tools enable IT managers to create the illusion of being everywhere at once. Many users are in the cloud and more will follow.

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Percentage saying external users were provided access to internal systems



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One specialist in remote system management, Barcelona-based NTRglobal, has gone 100 per cent down the cloud route with its NTRadmin service.

This is a full-fledged software-as-a-service (SaaS) offering for remote system management.

NTR Admin enables an IT manager to access any device from wherever they are and take remedial action.

NTR Admin also allows for automated tasks or bots to be created that perform mundane hourly, daily or weekly tasks: for example, software updates, security checks - even putting the wake-up capability in reverse and switching kit off overnight in order to save power and increase security.

There are other vendors taking the SaaS approach for system management. For example, Everdream for remote end-point management, acquired by Dell in late 2007; Klir Technologies focused on analytics; and Qualys that specialises in security management.

More SaaS offerings for systems management will become available as traditional systems management vendors, such as IBM, HP, CA, Symantec, BMC and Microsoft, start to drive their services into the cloud too.

A SaaS-based platform for systems management means data can be aggregated across many different organisations.

That is not to suggest that any one organisation's data could be compromised by another, but simply that the owner of the platform can provide anonymised statistics to the whole community.

For example, what is the ratio of Vista to XP? How many organisations are using desktop Linux? IT is essential to the way most businesses now operate and has fundamentally changed working practices.

About Quocirca

Quocirca is a primary research and analysis company specialising in the business impact of information technology and communications (ITC). With world-wide, native language reach, Quocirca provides in-depth insights into the views of buyers and influencers in large, mid-sized and small organisations. Its analyst team is made up of real-world practitioners with first hand experience of ITC delivery who continuously research and track the industry and its real usage in the markets.

Through researching perceptions, Quocirca uncovers the real hurdles to technology adoption – the personal and political aspects of an organisation's environment and the pressures of the need for demonstrable business value in any implementation. This capability to uncover and report back on the end-user perceptions in the market enables Quocirca to advise on the realities of technology adoption, not the promises.

Quocirca research is always pragmatic, business orientated and conducted in the context of the bigger picture. ITC has the ability to transform businesses and the processes that drive them, but often fails to do so. Quocirca's mission is to help organisations improve their success rate in process enablement through better levels of understanding and the adoption of the correct technologies at the correct time.

Quocirca has a pro-active primary research programme, regularly surveying users, purchasers and resellers of ITC products and services on emerging, evolving and maturing technologies. Over time, Quocirca has built a picture of long term investment trends, providing invaluable information for the whole of the ITC community.

Quocirca works with global and local providers of ITC products and services to help them deliver on the promise that ITC holds for business. Quocirca's clients include Oracle, Microsoft, IBM, O2, T-Mobile, HP, Xerox, EMC, Symantec and Cisco, along with other large and medium sized vendors, service providers and more specialist firms.

Details of Quocirca's work and the services it offers can be found at
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