

2024 IT Infrastructure Outlook

What infrastructure and operations teams are most focused on this year — and how they plan to succeed.



Visual One
Intelligence

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Key Findings

What's your top priority in 2024? And how can you set up your team for success?

We conducted a survey of nearly 250 IT infrastructure & operations (I&O) professionals across the United States to understand what is driving success in 2024.

Key Finding #1

I&O teams' top three priorities this year, in order, are:

- 1 Reducing dependency on VMware,
- 2 Migrating from on-prem to cloud infrastructure, and
- 3 Reducing cloud costs.

Goals such as reducing downtime, consolidating tools, and securing unstructured data remained important but ranked lower on teams' list of priorities.

Organizations of all sizes recognize the infrastructure landscape is changing. That's why teams need reliable ways to enhance ROI and reduce costs. In order to do that in environments with multiple vendors and hybrid platforms, **high-quality observability will be more important than ever.**

Key Finding #2

Spending too much time collecting and interpreting data directly correlated with significant losses in productivity.

Investing in infrastructure observability represents one of the best opportunities for improving overall productivity.

Key Finding #3

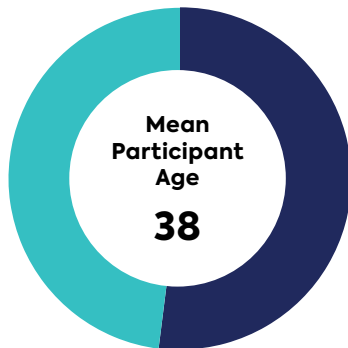
Spending more time on reactive/tactical work corresponded with increased "role overload," whereas respondents with enough time to achieve expectations reported greater job satisfaction.

Teams are more likely to be happier and more successful when they can prioritize strategic activity over time-consuming manual efforts.

Teams with less insights into their hybrid infrastructures seem to have less productivity, more stress, and less satisfaction — whereas more visibility leads to more success and satisfaction.

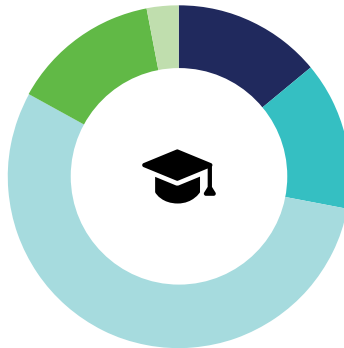
Survey Demographics

Participant Sex
(n=233)



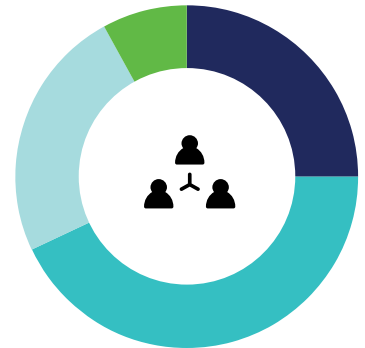
- Female (52%)
- Male (48%)

Highest Level of Education
(n=233)



- High-School/GED (14%)
- 2-year College Degree (14%)
- 4-year College Degree (55%)
- Master's Degree (14%)
- Doctoral Degree (3%)

Organization Size
(n=232)



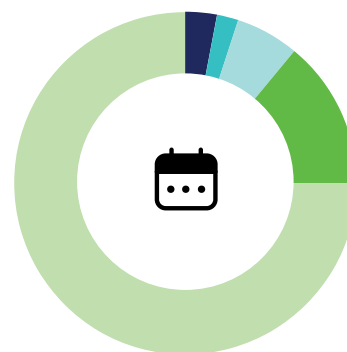
- Fewer than 500 employees (25%)
- 500-999 employees (43%)
- 1,000-4,999 employees (24%)
- 5,000+ employees (8%)

Do you consider the company to be high-performing (growing revenue by 15%+ per year)?
(n=232)



- Yes (88%)
- No (13%)

On average, how many days of the week do you work in the office currently?
(n=233)



- 1 day per week (3%)
- 2 days per week (2%)
- 3 days per week (6%)
- 4 days per week (14%)
- 5 days per week (74%)

Top Infrastructure Priorities in 2024

Out of nine possible priorities, here's how infrastructure teams ranked them for 2024 — including differences between differently sized organizations.

How big of a priority are each of the following goals for your organization in 2024?
(Responses from people saying they work in infrastructure operations.)
(n=315; all company sizes)

- 1 Reducing dependency on VMware
- 2 Migrating from on-prem to cloud infrastructure
- 3 Reducing cloud costs
- 4 Consolidating infrastructure vendors
- 5 Reducing downtime
- 6 Improving infrastructure observability
- 7 Securing unstructured data
- 8 Reducing IT operating expenses
- 9 Consolidating software tools

Priority #1

Reducing VMware Dependency

Context

The top-named priority in organizations of every size for 2024 factored around VMware. After years of being the de-facto virtualization provider that huge majorities of organizations relied on, their 2023 sale to Broadcom (and subsequent shifts in pricing, services, and subscription plans) set off a chain reaction of consumer panic.

Right on cue, Broadcom began 2024 by changing VMware pricing models in ways that would inevitably raise organizations' prices — sometimes dramatically — unless they sacrificed key functionality.

Challenges

With many organizations relying on VMware for their entire virtualization environment, reducing dependency is not as easy as lifting-and-shifting to a new provider. It can take years to carefully plan and execute that kind of architectural shift.

In the meantime, infrastructure teams can minimize budget impact by optimizing their VMware architecture (an often-neglected savings opportunity) and moving future workloads to a VMware alternative. The challenge is determining which alternative will offer the most cost-savings and operational benefits — as well as maintaining cohesive observability in a potentially multi-vendor compute environment.

Where We Fit In

As a vendor-neutral provider, **Visual One's** observability platform centralizes data from across VMware, cloud, Nutanix, containerized, on-prem, and VMware competitor environments.

We help teams maximize their compute efficiency for sustainable cost-savings through optimization monitoring & recommendations — as well as cross-platform cost comparisons and performance modeling that makes it easy to identify the best alternative for VMware workloads now or in the future.

Priority #2

Migrating from On-Prem to the Cloud

Context

Journeys to the cloud are not a new priority within IT infrastructures — but they are still as relevant as ever. Industries that lagged behind in cloud adoption, such as healthcare and finance, are increasingly catching up in order to take advantage of cloud's many long-term benefits.

On-prem storage, meanwhile, is itself shifting towards cloud-like pricing models, with many vendors prioritizing as-a-service and subscription models in addition to traditional hardware.

Challenges

As always, such a dramatic shift in architecture requires lots of planning, preparation, and adaptability along the way. And when it comes to sustaining operations and maintaining regulatory compliance, there's no room for error.

Additionally, migrating to a new platform doesn't fix any existing problems — it simply shifts them to a new platform. Cost-conscious teams will make gains towards reducing both on-prem and cloud costs by improving storage optimization.

Where We Fit In

As an all-in-one platform for storage, cloud, and compute monitoring, **Visual One** is uniquely situated to help teams prepare for and optimize evolutions from on-prem to hybrid architectures.

With comprehensive capacity planning, performance analytics, file analysis, and right-sizing abilities, Visual One helps prevent wasteful spending on new storage or bulky cloud contracts.

Priority #3

Optimizing Cloud Costs

Context

While moving to the cloud is its own priority, what about once you're there? Few recent IT challenges have been as well documented as spikes in cloud costs, driven by a combination of complex cloud pricing structures and slow development of FinOps principles and skills.

Recent surveys indicate that teams routinely waste as much as 30% of cloud spending — even as many organizations routinely overspend their cloud budgets.

Challenges

Complex cloud pricing structures can be difficult for teams to dissect and take advantage of. A 2023 FinOps Foundation report found that nearly half of organizations left money on the table by failing to take advantage of volume-based discounts, for example.

With major cloud providers reducing or eliminating egress fees, more organizations are becoming multi-cloud in part to take advantage of the best prices on the market. More cloud platforms can mean more data fragmentation, however, making it harder to monitor and optimize environments.

Where We Fit In

By putting multi-vendor cloud, virtualization, and storage data all in one place, **Visual One** enables multiple cost-reduction and FinOps activities including chargeback/showback reporting, workload cost reporting and comparisons, right-sizing recommendations, and capacity planning.



Better Observability = More Productivity

Data sprawl is inevitable.

Not only is data growing at unprecedented rates, but the diversification of data storage platforms (moving from multi-vendor storage devices into the cloud, edge, hyperconvergence, etc.) is making it exponentially harder to keep tabs on IT infrastructure.

The consequences of data sprawl, however, are notable.

Survey results show that productivity losses coincide with excessive time spent collecting and organizing data.

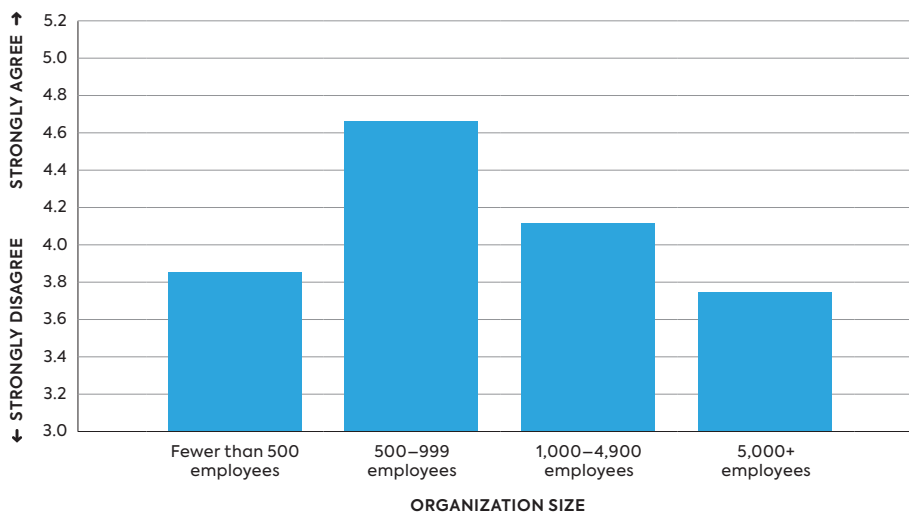
Similarly, many respondents admitted having trouble making decisions because of too much data and too many reports.

Both of these results were especially true in medium-sized organizations with 500 or more employees.

Visual One Intelligence did all the work for us so we could spend our time on decision-making, not data collection and analysis.

IT MANAGER, RETAILER

I find it difficult to make decisions due to the massive amounts of data and/or reports to absorb. (n=244)



Average responses are plotted on the vertical axis. Response options range from 1 to 7, with 1 being *strongly disagree*, and 7 being *strongly agree*.

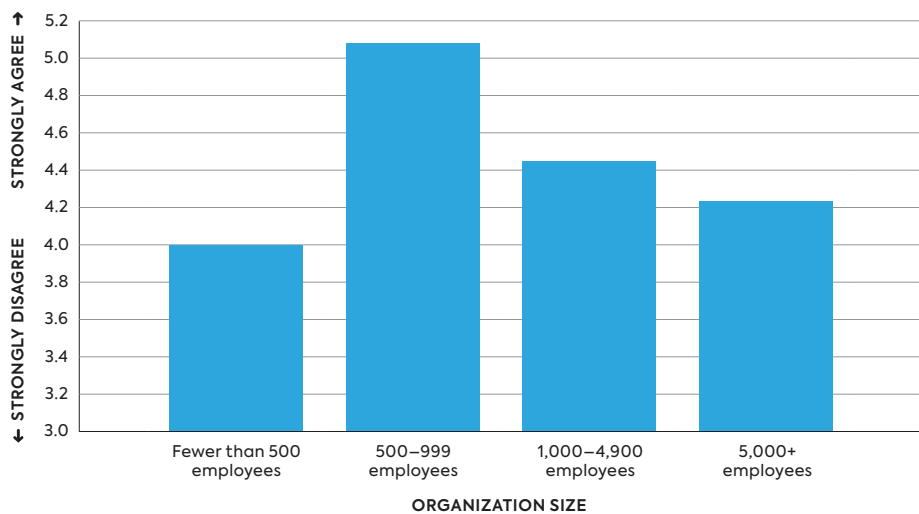
Why? One possibility is that while medium-sized organizations have massive amounts of data, they don't have the same access to additional staffing and expensive tools that some enterprise organizations do.

Which isn't to say that enterprise organizations don't also face similar struggles. Even the largest organizations surveyed showed a tendency to struggle acting effectively on all their data and reports.

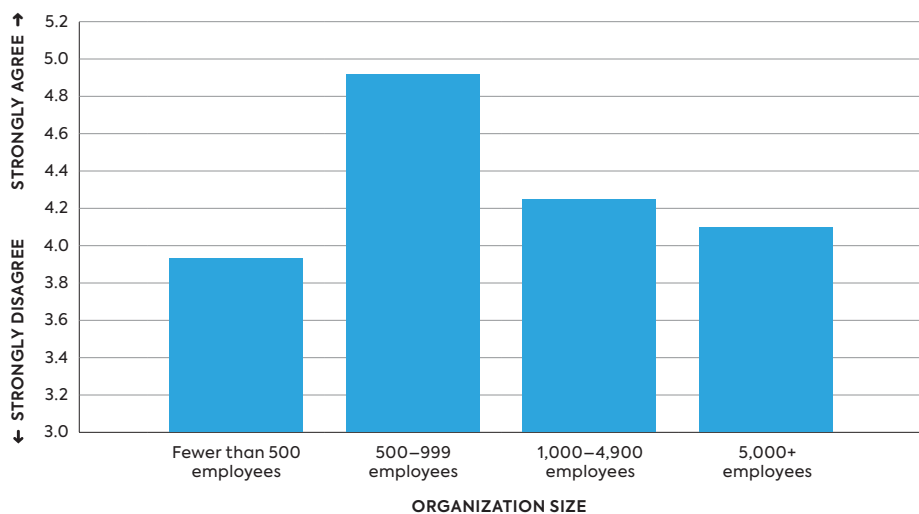
Productivity Loss

Participants reporting spending too much time trying to collect and organize data **also reported** statistically significant levels of productivity loss.

I spend too much time trying to collect and organize data. (n=244)



I struggle to effectively act on all the data and reports available to me. (n=244)



TAKEAWAY

Organizations are putting a lot of effort into saving money through architectural changes (cloud migrations, moving away from VMware, etc.) But if you're not investing in the right tools to supercharge observability, you could be leaving lots of money on the table through ineffective decision-making and work-day inefficiencies. Teams and their leaders are hired for their expertise; organizations stand to gain by enabling teams to apply their skills instead of bogging them down with busy-work.

Risk Factors for Job Dissatisfaction

SMBs beware.

Throughout the survey, small-to-medium sized businesses (SMBs) with 500–999 employees consistently showed the highest levels of job stress or risk factors for dissatisfaction, displaying the most frequent agreement with statements like:

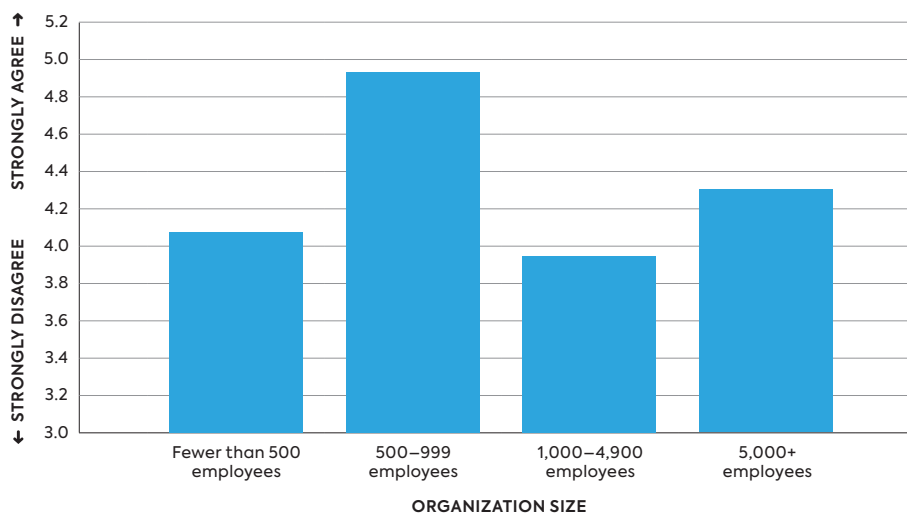
- “It often seems like I have too much work for one person to do”
- “The performance standards for my job are too high”
- “Daily responsibilities are unpredictable more often than they are predictable”
- “I struggle to prioritize high-value work”
- “I need to use too many software tools to do my job”

More so than both smaller and larger organizations, these SMBs demonstrated heightened rates of overwork and cognitive depletion linked to excessive tactical labor (ex: lots of time compiling reports, using software tools, etc.).

Visual One’s
capacity planning
automation reduced
our reporting time
by 50%...we saved
an entire FTE — plus
significant cost savings
between tools.

CAPACITY PLANNER, FINANCIAL SERVICES

The performance standards for my job are too high. (n=244)



Average responses are plotted on the vertical axis. Response options range from 1 to 7, with 1 being *strongly disagree*, and 7 being *strongly agree*.

Among all organizations, this kind of manual work was linked to “role overload.” On the other hand, teams with balanced workloads and time to focus on what matters displayed much higher levels of job satisfaction.

Job Satisfaction

Participants given enough time to do what is expected in their job **also reported** statistically significant levels of job satisfaction.

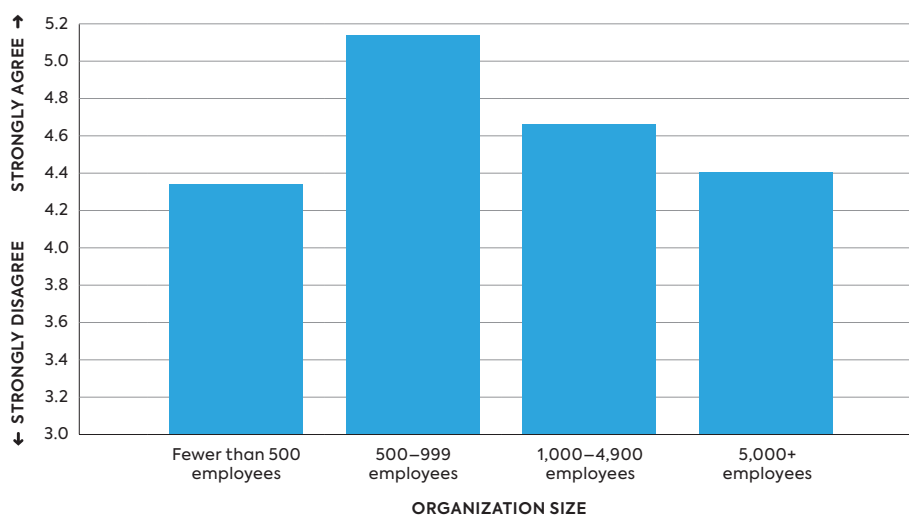
Role Overload

Participants spending crucial time on reactive, tactical work **also reported** statistically significant levels of role overload.

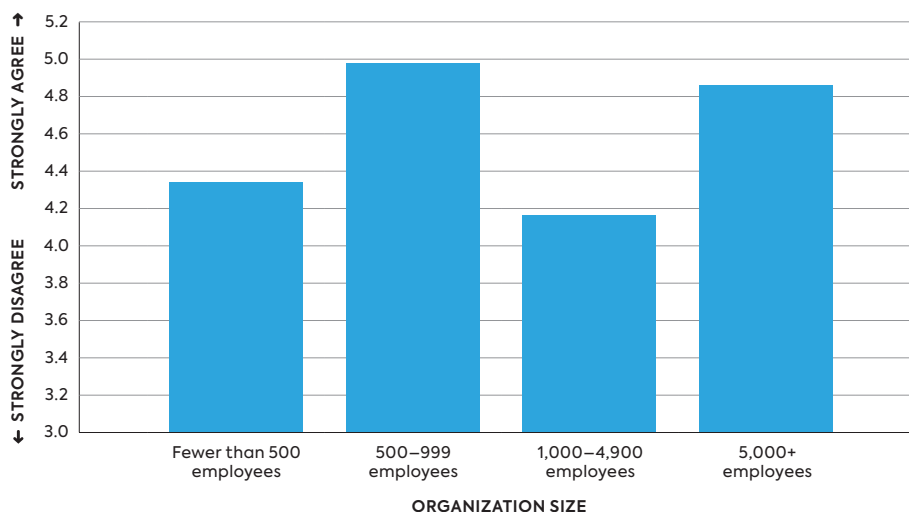
Cognitive Depletion

Participants using a computer/device for job-related activities during family time **also reported** statistically significant levels of cognitive depletion. Also, cognitive depletion is correlated with withdrawal from job (not showing up; pre-quitting behaviors).

I using a computer/device during family time to do my job. (n=244)



It often seems like I have too much work for one person to do. (n=244)



TAKEAWAY

While lots of ink has been spilled about employee preferences for remote work, the data for IT I&O workers shows less of a correlation between job satisfaction and working from home than it does between job satisfaction and overall role balance. Leaders looking to improve employee satisfaction should start with finding ways to improve their teams' abilities to perform – such as investing in solutions that automate tedious labor (like gathering and interpreting analytics).

Top 5 Takeaways

1

Infrastructure teams can reduce VMware dependency now by optimizing their VMware architecture for immediate savings and moving future workloads to a VMware alternative.

2

Cloud migrations are most effective when teams can optimize both their on-prem and cloud environments (instead of migrating inefficient storage to the cloud).

3

With cloud cost reduction efforts (like FinOps), organizations can **cut wasted cloud spend by as much as 30%**.

4

If you're not investing in the right tools to supercharge observability, **you could be leaving lots of money on the table** through ineffective decision-making and work-day inefficiencies.

5

Leaders looking to improve employee satisfaction should start with finding ways to improve their teams' abilities to perform — such as investing in solutions that automate tedious labor (like gathering and interpreting analytics).

About Visual One Intelligence™

Visual One Intelligence™ surfaces interpretive insights and actionable recommendations in hybrid-platform IT infrastructure environments by helping identify and prevent risks, understand and remediate existing problems, enhance operational efficiency, and optimize asset ROI.

By consolidating independent data elements into unified metrics, Visual One's platform correlates and interprets hybrid infrastructure data to illuminate cost-saving and operations-sustaining details that otherwise stay hidden.

See for yourself with a free [on-demand demo!](#)



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