nexthink

State of the DEX Industry

Back in 2019,

Digital Employee Experience (DEX) was still a novel idea, popular among only a few select companies.

Then the pandemic hit and all of a sudden, IT had to endure a steep learning curve.

Four years later we asked 2,000 IT Decision-Makers (ITDMs) and Office Workers:

What's changed?

What's the same?

Where's the DEX industry heading?

Introduction

It's been four years since our first State of the DEX Industry report and a lot has changed in the world. We published our research in early winter 2020 and then the pandemic hit, and "Digital Employee Experience Management" was thrust into the spotlight.

Enough time has passed now where we can ask questions— big questions—like:

Is IT any better at managing their employees' digital expectations today? Are knowledge workers still hiding roughly half of the technology issues they experience from EUC Teams? Where is this industry going and should we be worried?

Teaming up with Vanson Bourne, a renowned independent research firm, we surveyed 2,000 ITDMs and Office Workers across 11 work sectors and four major markets (the U.S.A., the U.K., France and Germany). The results show a strong need for better DEX Management technologies and strategies. We hope this data helps inform your technology purchases, hiring needs and end-user plans.

Inside This Report

Data Highlights

90%

of respondants believe that a good digital experience is **at least very important** to them at work

85%

believe that their organization should be doing more to **improve the digital experience** employees receive at work

96%

of IT decision makers report that their depart-ment **experienced challenges** when rolling out new technology over the last 12-24 months

44%

of **IT/technology issues** that office workers experience are **reported to the IT department,** on average

Tug of War: Demand for DEX Is High But IT Is Still Trailing Dangerously Behind

DEX has grown in importance since the pandemic

Percentage of respondents who thought a good DEX was at least very important (if not critical) to work

82%
Then: 2019
Now: 2023
90%

And yet, both office workers and ITDMs still feel their organizations should be doing more

Percentage of respondents who believe the organization should be doing more to improve DEX

84%
Then: 2019
Now: 2023
85%

Ultimately, ITDMs believe office workers are satisfied with their DEX, but that's not what employees think!

54% of ITDMs believe their organization's workers are 'completely satisfied'

But only **24%** of Office Workers feel that way

Respondent audience: ITDMs & Office Workers, omitting some answer options

Burning Money: IT Will Replace or Remove 37% of New Tech Rollouts

93% of organizations have rolled out new technologies over the last two years.

Unsurprisingly, since the pandemic, **IT has introduced more automation workflow and Chatbot/AI technologies**.
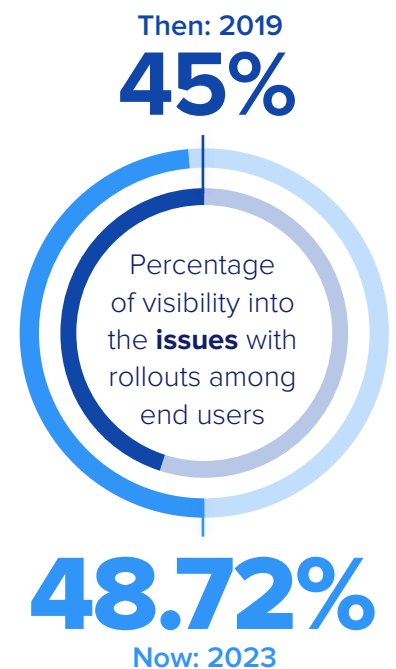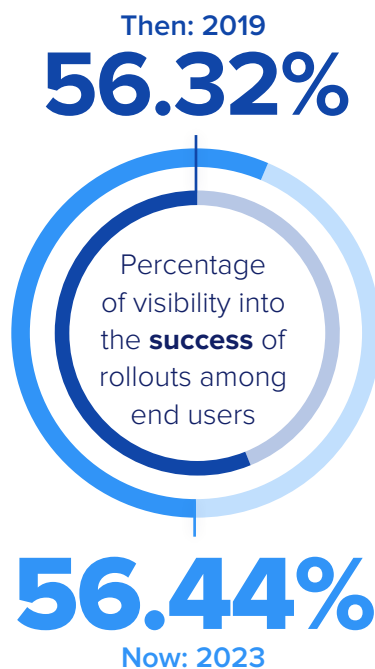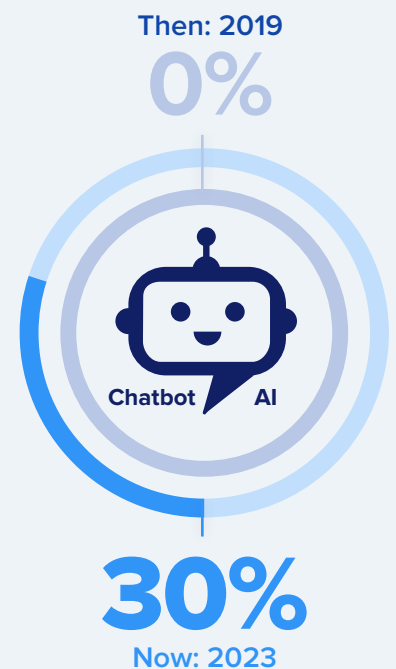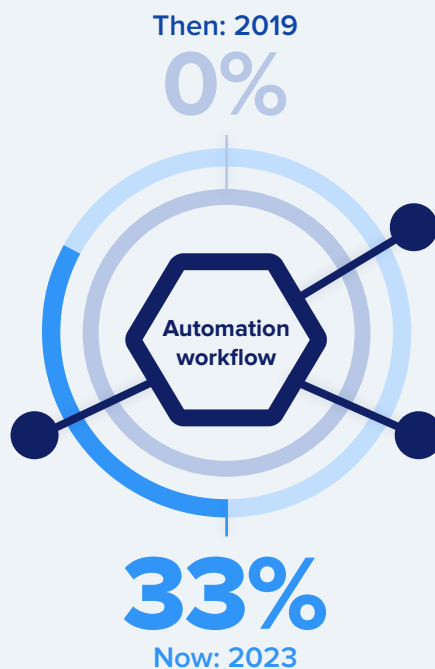
?

Which of the following types of technology have been rolled out in your organization over the last 12-24 months?

However, for all the effort that's been put into new upgrades, web browsing tools, etc., **ITDMs admit they still have little visibility** into the efficacy of these projects.

%

Percentage of visibility into **success and issues of rollouts** among end users

Then: 2019
0%

Automation workflow

33%
Now: 2023

Then: 2019
0%

Chatbot   AI

30%
Now: 2023

Then: 2019
56.32%

Percentage of visibility into the **success** of rollouts among end users

56.44%
Now: 2023

Then: 2019
45%

Percentage of visibility into the **issues** with rollouts among end users

48.72%
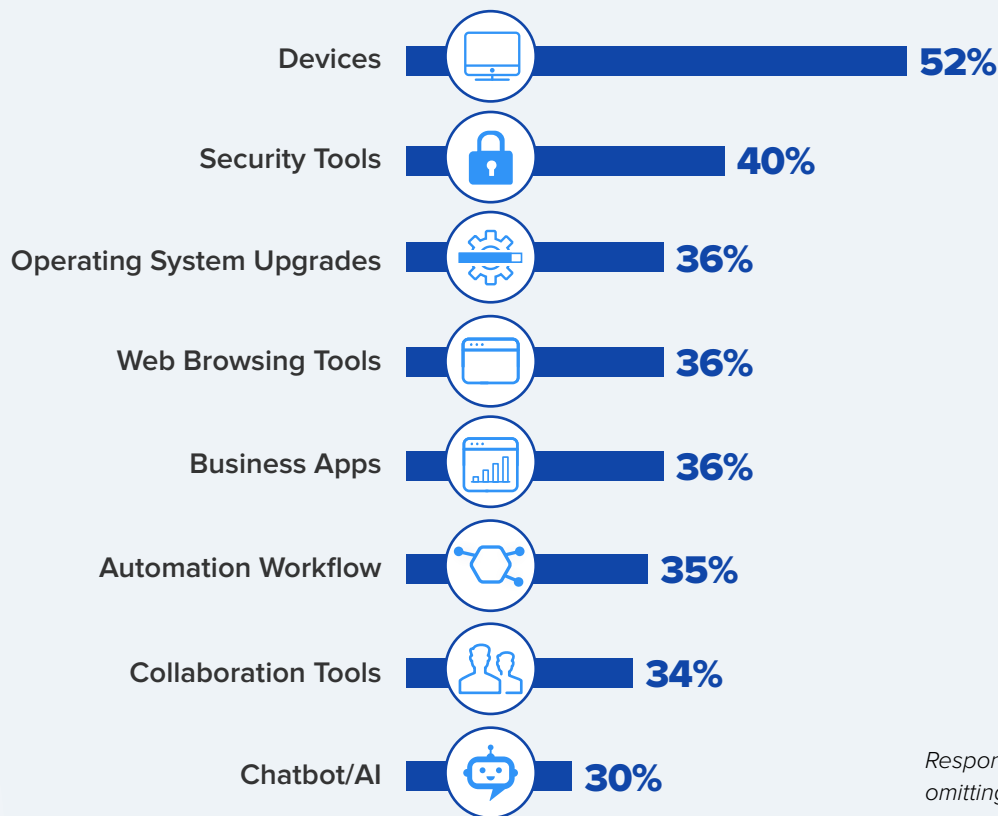Now: 2023

Respondent audience: ITDMs

Oh, What a Waste!

Virtually every ITDM (96%) reported their team experienced challenges when rolling out new technologies over the last 12-24 months, with only a quarter claiming those projects were 'totally successful'.

In fact, the vast majority (82%) of ITDMs plan to remove or replace at least one of their new technology rollouts.

Which technologies rolled out by your organization in the last 12-24 months is it looking to **replace/remove?**

Technology	Percentage
Devices	52%
Security Tools	40%
Operating System Upgrades	36%
Web Browsing Tools	36%
Business Apps	36%
Automation Workflow	35%
Collaboration Tools	34%
Chatbot/AI	30%

Respondent audience: ITDMs, omitting some answer options

Throwing Away Good Hardware

On average, ITDMs plan to replace 50% of their devices over the next 3 years.

Undoubtedly, old hardware can negatively impact DEX, but we think most EUC Teams are making a costly mistake.

In a previous Nexthink Insights report, we examined 1.6 million anonymous customer devices that were +3 years old and discovered that only 2% needed to be replaced outright! The remaining 98% could be saved with a simple RAM upgrade or configuration change!

It Often Comes Down to End-User Problems

A majority of the problems recorded in our survey came down to user-based challenges. Office workers said they were confused using the new tools that IT invested in, and they don't always report the issues they experience (more on that later).

92%
perceive impacts to **technical** challenges

71%
of organizations faced **user-based** challenges

Managing Remote Workers Has Made IT's Job Considerably More Complex

69% of ITDMS agree that the growth in remote work has made their jobs harder and more complex. And it's no wonder, without the right remote access and monitoring solutions, managing your employees' devices can seem impossible.

?

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? The growth in **remote working over the past 3 years has increased the complexity** of my job.

69% Agree

30% Disagree
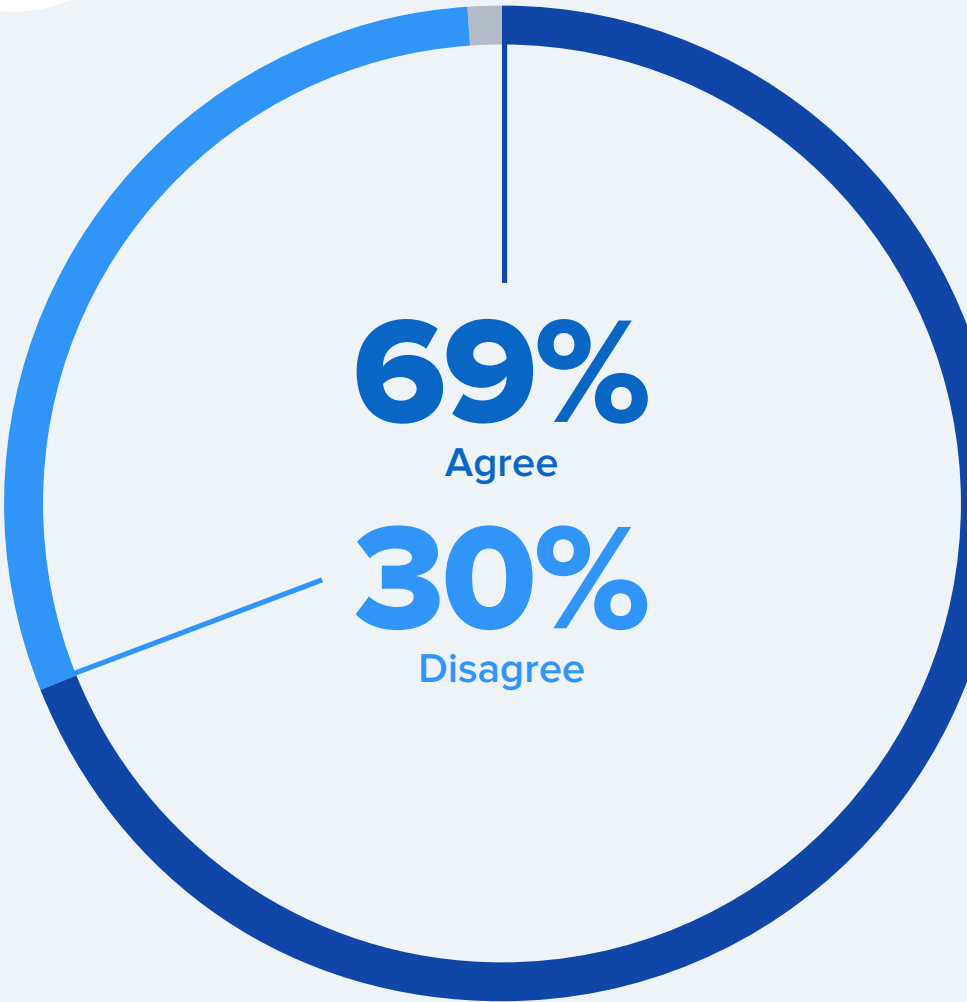
Respondent audience: ITDMs, omitting some answer options

Silent Struggles: Employees Report Just 44% of Tech Issues, EUC Teams Oblivious

We thought it was alarming back in 2019 when employees admitted to reporting just 55% of the IT issues they faced, but four years later, it's even worse!

What **proportion of IT/ technology issues that you experience do you report** to IT?

55% Then: 2019   Now: 2023 **44%**
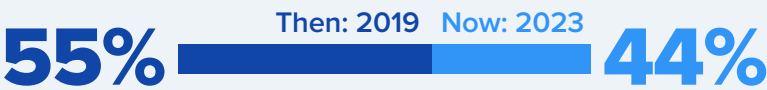
Respondent audience: Office Workers

Without a strong DEX structure in place, it makes sense that office workers are less inclined to seek help from IT, whether they work in-office, remote or in a hybrid environment. This is concerning because we found that respondents:

Average at least one IT problem per week.

And when an IT issue does arise, it can take up to 27 minutes for IT to fix it!

MTWTF

1 per week

27min
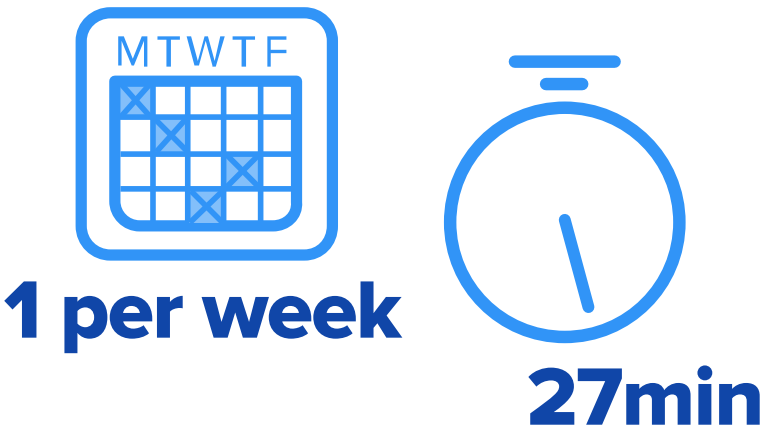
The Tech Problems People Tolerate or Report

Employees and IT don't always perceive the same problems the same way. For example, office workers are less likely to report (and thus more willing to tolerate) manual reboots and disk space issues. But from IT's perspective, over a quarter of ITDMs believe those items are critical because they might signal a wider state of issues.
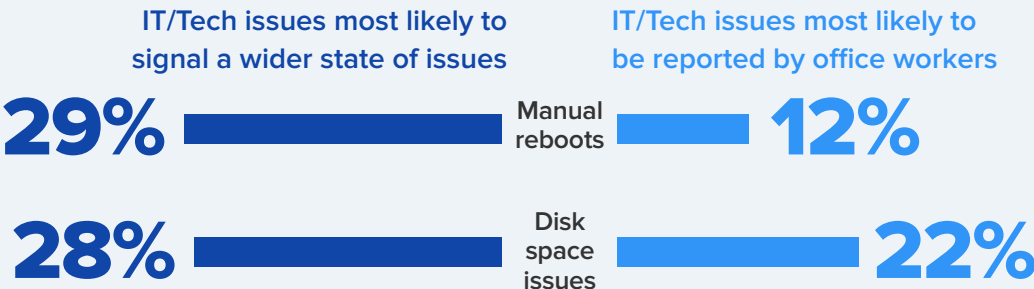
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Which of the following IT/technology issues are most likely to **signal a wider state of issues** within your organization?

Respondent audience: IT decision makers, omitting some answer options

Which of the following IT/technology issues would you be **most likely to report** to the IT department?

Respondent audience: Office Workers, omitting some answer options

IT/Tech issues most likely to signal a wider state of issues

IT/Tech issues most likely to be reported by office workers

29% — Manual reboots — **12%**

28% — Disk space issues — **22%**

The lesson here is that it's important that employee expectations are met and a company's DEX is supported, whether tickets are raised or not.

What Happens When Employees Don't Contact the IT department?

We know that only 44% of IT issues experienced are reported. But what about the other 56%? How do employees react?

If the employee doesn't immediately contact IT, they will likely try to either reboot their device, investigate the issue alone or ask their colleague(s) for help.

?

What actions do you take when you experience IT/technology issues in your role?

Reboot my device
56%

Look for a workaround myself
49%

Ask a colleague for advice
39%
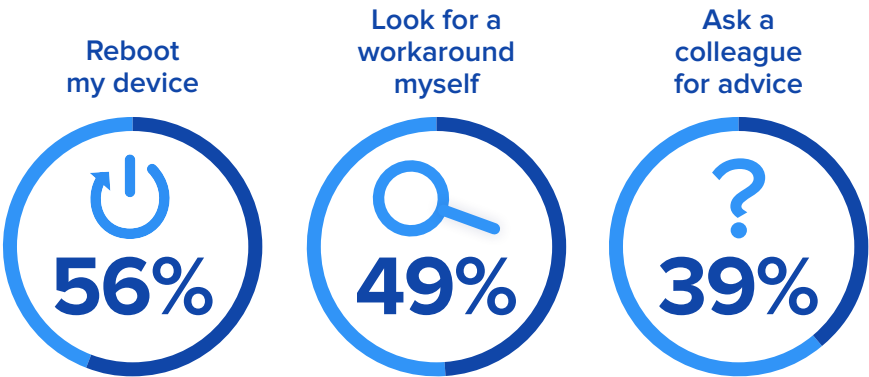
The takeaway here is clear: a single employee computing problem can have a negative knock-on effect across your userbase.

IT Has Limited Visibility into Software Usage

Many of the issues employees face, whether reported or not, have to do with the software on the device.

Most office workers use 4 software applications a day to improve their productivity. However, **ITDMs admit they can only see about 60% of the tools** their employees use.

60%

This is a significant vulnerability for EUC and DEX-focused teams. To make matters worse, in a previous Insights report we investigated over 6 million anonymous customer devices and found that **50% of software seats in those laptops and desktops weren't being used.**
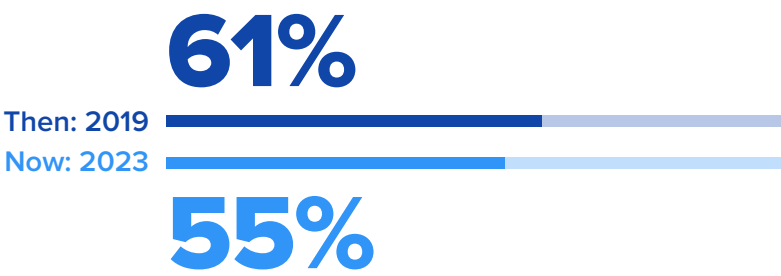
What a waste!

50%

Task Hunting: EUC Teams Spend Half of Time Fixing Recurring Problems

IT downtime as an accepted norm has improved only slightly.

Percentage that **agree IT downtime is an accepted norm** at their organization

61%
Then: 2019

Now: 2023
55%

IT spends close to half its time each week (45%) fixing recurring problems and nearly the same amount (43%) putting devices back into a desired state.

45%
Time fixing recurring problems

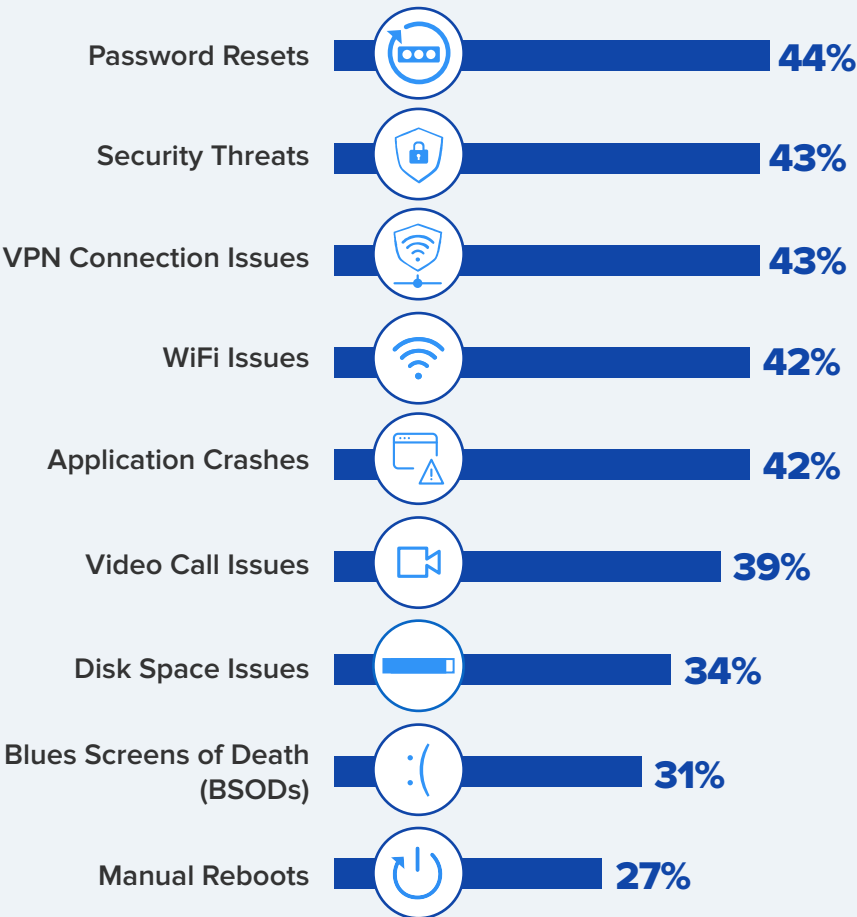## 43%
Time putting devices back to their original state
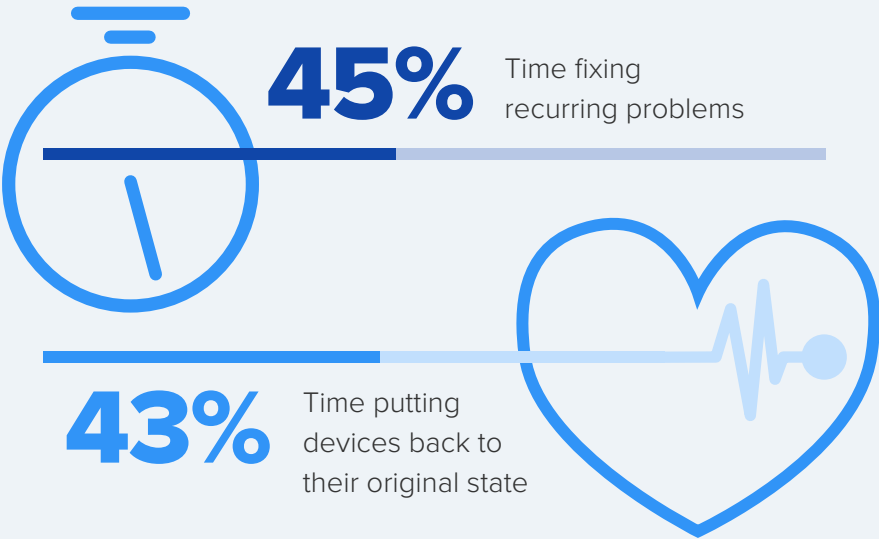
Employees report a range of issues to IT departments, many of which require IT to respond with the same tasks and investigations.

Thinking Back Over the Last 12-24 Months

What IT/technology issues have employees reported to the IT department?

| Issue	
Password Resets	44%
Security Threats	43%
VPN Connection Issues	43%
WiFi Issues	42%
Application Crashes	42%
Video Call Issues	39%
Disk Space Issues	34%
Blues Screens of Death (BSODs)	31%
Manual Reboots	27%

Respondent audience: ITDMs

A proper DEX Management tool can eliminate manual work and troubleshooting by applying automated patches, system updates and a host of other proactive solutions.

Low Expectations: Most ITDMs Agree, "Remote Work Has Made My Job More Complex"

When IT issues are not reported to the IT department, it always leads to bigger issues across the organization. Knowing that employees report fewer problems than they did four years ago, this is cause for concern.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? **When IT issues are not reported to the IT department, it always leads to bigger issues** across the organization.

79% Agree

Then: 2019

Now: 2023

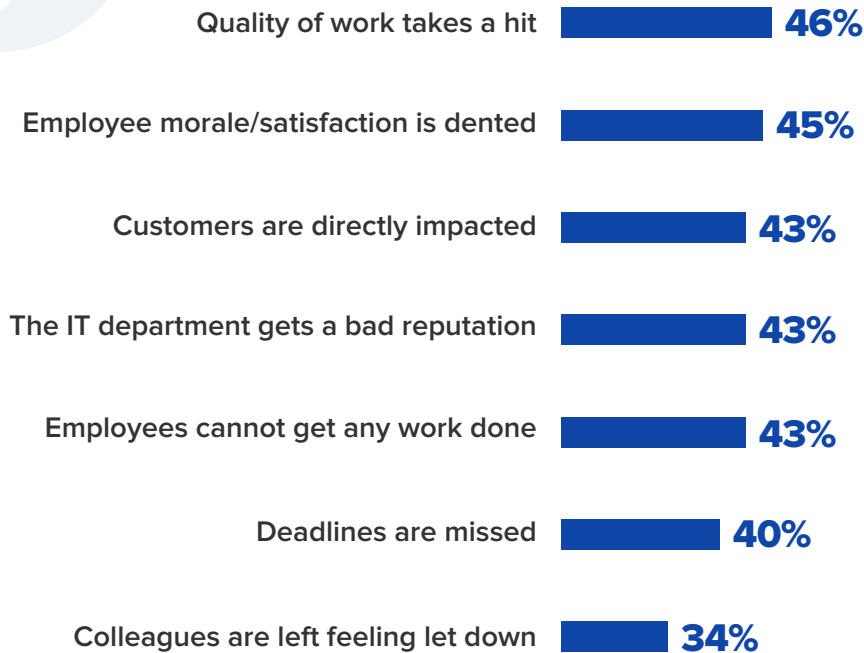**73%** Agree
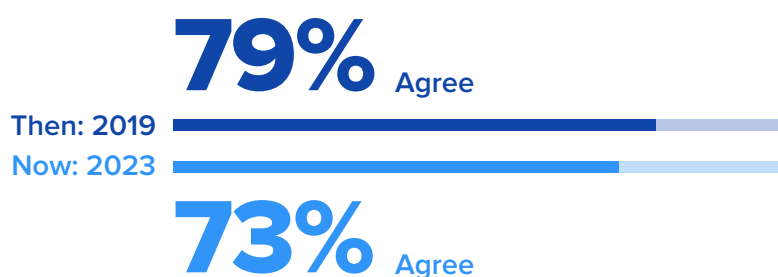
70% of ITDMs

believe that the growth in remote working has increased the complexity of their jobs, and it's no wonder! Since the pandemic, many in IT went from managing one office (or a handful) to managing hundreds and thousands of "offices" via the remote and hybrid end-users they now support.

Previous tasks like encrypting a work device, or corroborating a poor Wi-Fi signal have become increasingly more complex when the end-user connects from a remote, uncontrolled location.

The stakes have been raised significantly since 2019. End-user problems, no matter how small, can act like a thousand tiny cuts on the employee experience.

What are the impacts when IT/technology issues prevent the average employee in your organization's workforce from doing their job?

Impact	Percentage
Quality of work takes a hit	46%
Employee morale/satisfaction is dented	45%
Customers are directly impacted	43%
The IT department gets a bad reputation	43%
Employees cannot get any work done	43%
Deadlines are missed	40%
Colleagues are left feeling let down	34%

66% perceive impacts to **employee productivity**

64% perceive impacts to **employee well-being**

Respondent audience: ITDMs, omitting some answer options

69% of ITDMs view a poor tech experience as a contributing factor to a negative employee experience, directly citing its impact on work quality, morale, customer relations and the IT department's reputation.

But if a poor tech experience negatively impacts a worker's overall view, then it follows that an optimal tech experience can do the reverse. **When employees are secured with the best technologies and IT support, they're able to do more, collaborate better and stay engaged.**

Conclusion: Imagining a Better Future

Not all of the data from our survey told a negative story about the digital workplace. We did find a few examples that left us feeling optimistic about the future of work:

1) End-user woes and opinions don't reflect evenly across each industry nor country.

    a. We surveyed people across four countries (the U.S.A., the U.K., France and Germany) and 11 sectors. For example, those who work in Banking, have a different DEX compared to those in Oil & Gas. And in many cases, the answers from ITDMS and Office Workers reveal positives.

2) There is a willingness from ITDMs to improve and invest in a smarter digital workplace.

    a. Budgets reflect whether IT Leaders are serious or not about DEX and the digital workplace. The good news? ITDMs plan to invest more year-over-year in DEX.
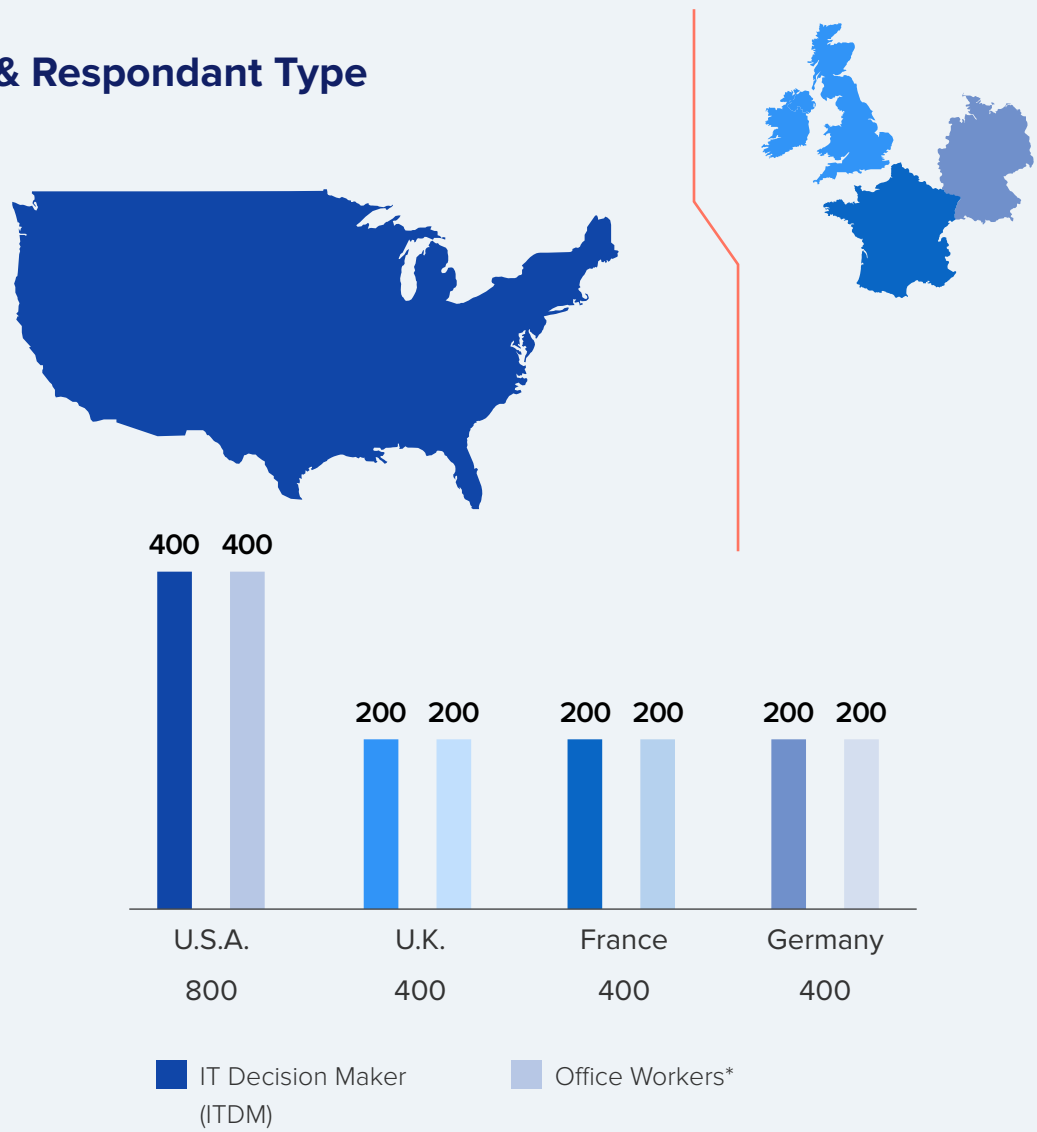

With the right Digital Employee Experience platform, the problems between ITDMs and Office Workers can be fixed. We believe our platform is the only solution available to help you focus on what matters, understand the total context, quickly and proactively fix issues and unlock unique employee insights.

About the Survey

Teaming up with Vanson Bourne, we interviewed 1,000 Senior IT Decision Makers and 1,000 *Office Workers during summer 2023. In a few instances, we've compared results with similar questions used in our 2019 survey (The Experience 2020 Report) which included a sample size of 3,000 ITDMs and Office Workers (split evenly).

Country & Respondant Type

	U.S.A.	U.K.	France	Germany
	400 / 400	200 / 200	200 / 200	200 / 200
	800	400	400	400

■ IT Decision Maker (ITDM)   ■ Office Workers*

Respondent type is based on both functional area and seniority of respondent.
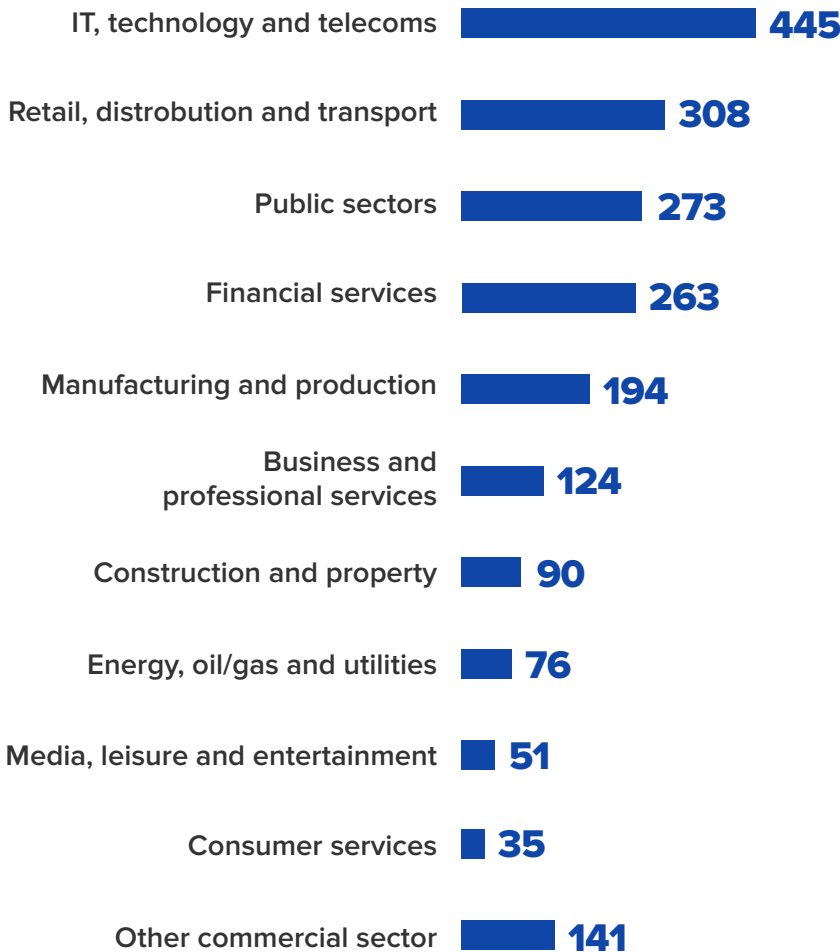
*Office Workers: employees from any non-IT function and any seniority level. Includes in-office, hybrid and remote workers.

Respondents by Organization Size

2,000 Respondents

1,068

449

483

- 1,500-2,99 employees
- 3,000-4,999 employees
- 5,000 or more employees

Respondents by Sector

Sector	Value
IT, technology and telecoms	445
Retail, distrobution and transport	308
Public sectors	273
Financial services	263
Manufacturing and production	194
Business and professional services	124
Construction and property	90
Energy, oil/gas and utilities	76
Media, leisure and entertainment	51
Consumer services	35
Other commercial sector	141

ABOUT NEXTHINK

Nexthink is the global leader in Digital Employee Experience management. The company's products allow enterprises to create highly productive digital workplaces for their employees by delivering optimal end-user experiences. Through a unique combination of real-time analytics, automation and employee feedback across all endpoints, Nexthink helps IT teams meet the needs of the modern digital workplace.

Have questions about the Nexthink platform?

CONTACT US

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Want to learn more about how Nexthink can help you improve employee experience?