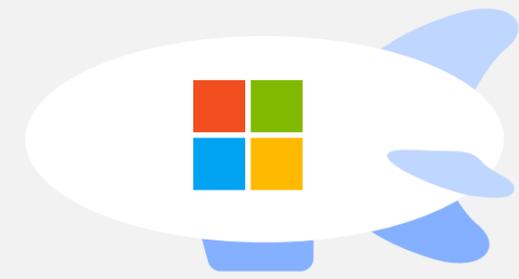


BetterCloud



2023

# State of SaaS Ops



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# Welcome to the 2023 State of SaaSOps

It's hard to believe, but this is our tenth annual report that explores trends in SaaS operations.

Since 2012, we've been surveying IT about the impact of SaaS, making this the industry's largest and longest-running research of its kind. This year, **743** IT and security professionals weighed in, sharing a *lot* of interesting perspectives. This report is our most in-depth look yet at the challenges (and opportunities!) that come from SaaS management.

How quickly is SaaS adoption still growing, and what are the most urgent challenges facing IT today? Why does SaaS security continue to keep IT up at night? Which SaaSOps processes are organizations automating the most, and how critical is automation? (Spoiler alert: Very.) What are IT's biggest priorities for 2023, and how are they measuring success? We'll cover all of this—and more.

We're excited to share the results with you here. We hope you can use these insights to accelerate your SaaS operations practice, especially as IT's role continues to evolve.

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# Here's a look at the biggest trends and takeaways.

Organizations are still using more SaaS apps than ever, but growth has slowed a bit amid consolidation.

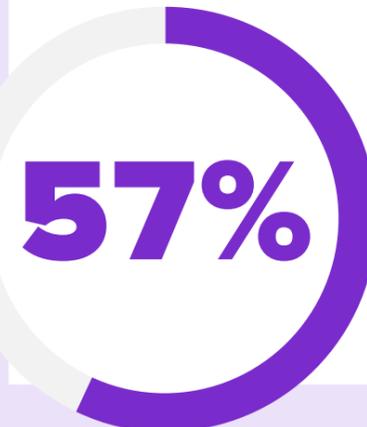
This year, **40% of respondents said they consolidated redundant SaaS apps**, prompting some slowdown in SaaS adoption. Despite that, the number of SaaS apps used is still up 18% from last year, with organizations now using **130** SaaS apps on average.

Shadow IT still brings SaaS sprawl, unsanctioned apps, and limited visibility.

**59%** of IT professionals find SaaS sprawl challenging to manage. A key part of the challenge? Shedding light on shadow IT.

**65%** of all SaaS apps are unsanctioned, where users are adopting them without IT's knowledge or approval.

In response, IT is bringing more SaaS apps under their control.



of IT professionals have increased the number of SaaS apps that are managed and supported by IT in the past 12 months.

SaaS security is increasingly IT's responsibility, and it's not going away any time soon.

The line between security and IT is blurring:

A whopping **81%** of IT professionals say they are responsible for protecting sensitive data within SaaS apps.

And the amount of sensitive data is **rising** too:

**43%** say they've added a new SaaS app that stores sensitive data in the last 12 months.

80% say there's a new charter for IT: employee experience.



Employee experience matters more than ever—especially in the ambiguity of remote workplaces, and especially on Day 1. But a staggering **86%** of IT professionals said their new employees lacked access to the necessary tools to do their jobs on Day 1.

Enter: a new edict for IT. **80%** of IT professionals say that in the next 12 months, IT will be increasingly responsible for employee experience, helping provide better tools, information, and support for all employees and unlocking new ways to work.

Nearly everyone finds automation critical to overcoming today's SaaS Ops challenges.

**86%**

of IT professionals believe automation is important to effectively managing SaaS operations, but nearly two-thirds (**64%**) lack insight and visibility to automate effectively.

For many enterprises, the automation journey is underway—bringing new automated processes, skill specialization, and the right tools to get the job done.

**71%** have already automated at least one help desk process, like onboarding or password resets. Carving out specialized automation teams is on IT's roadmap too.

**43%** already have a dedicated SaaS Ops automation role or team where they only develop and manage automated workflows, and another **23%** plan to.

Enterprises know that the future of SaaS Ops is more than automation.

**72%** say it's zero-touch automation.

Zero-touch automation is the process of orchestrating automated workflows in order to replace all manual IT touchpoints. **72%** believe zero-touch automation is the future of SaaS Ops, and another **69%** are working toward zero-touch automation.





**1**

**SaaS in the  
Workplace**

# Organizations are still using more SaaS apps than ever, but growth has slowed a bit

Up from an average of 110 apps last year, this year organizations use an average of **130 apps, for an 18% increase.**

After rapid acceleration of SaaS adoption in the beginning of the decade, the yearly growth pace has finally slowed down a bit for the first time. To be sure, organizations are still adopting new SaaS applications. But whereas last year's annual growth rate was 38%, this year it's fallen to 18%.

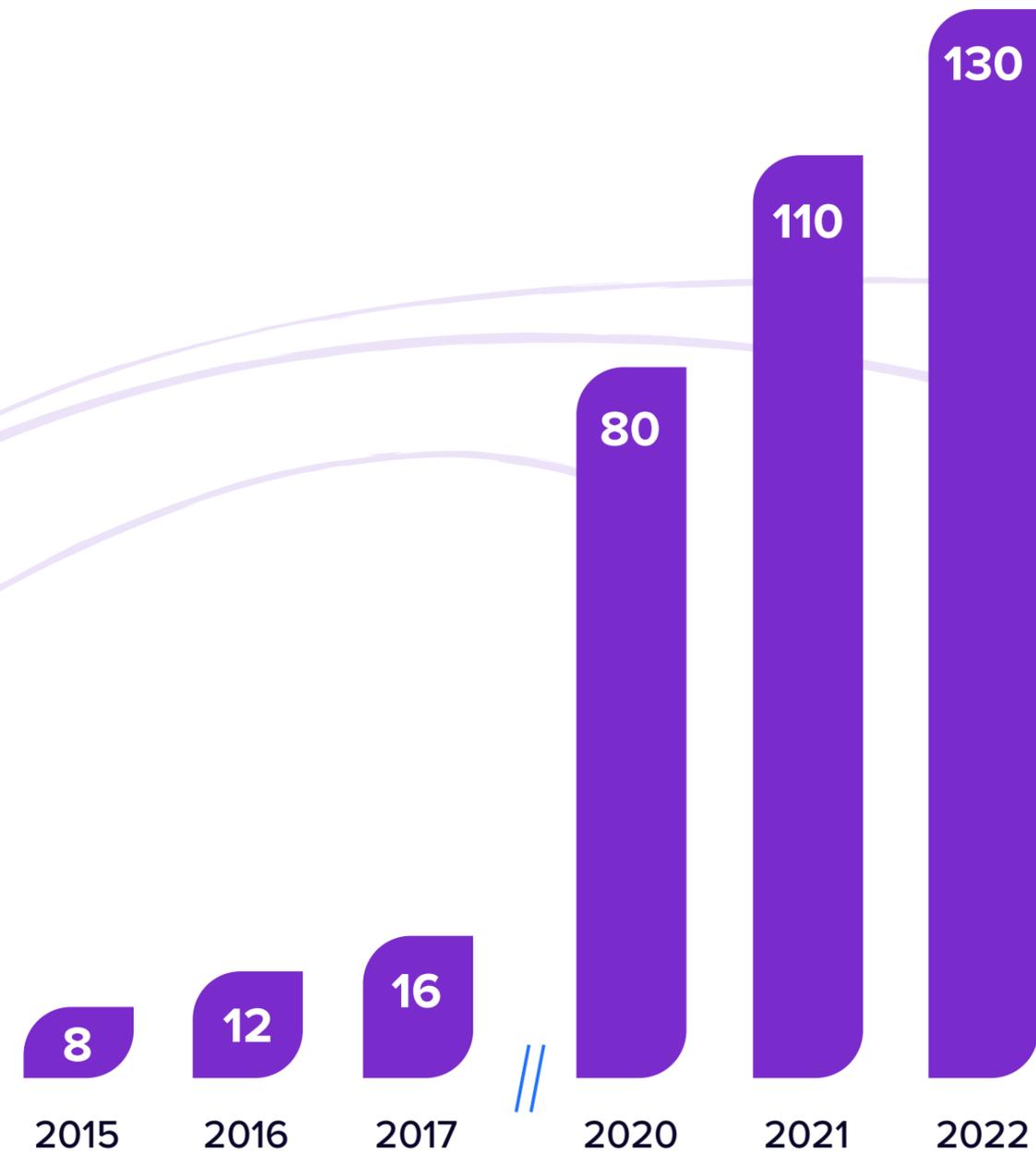
**18%**

SaaS adoption growth since 2021

**16x**

growth since 2015

Number of SaaS apps used per organization

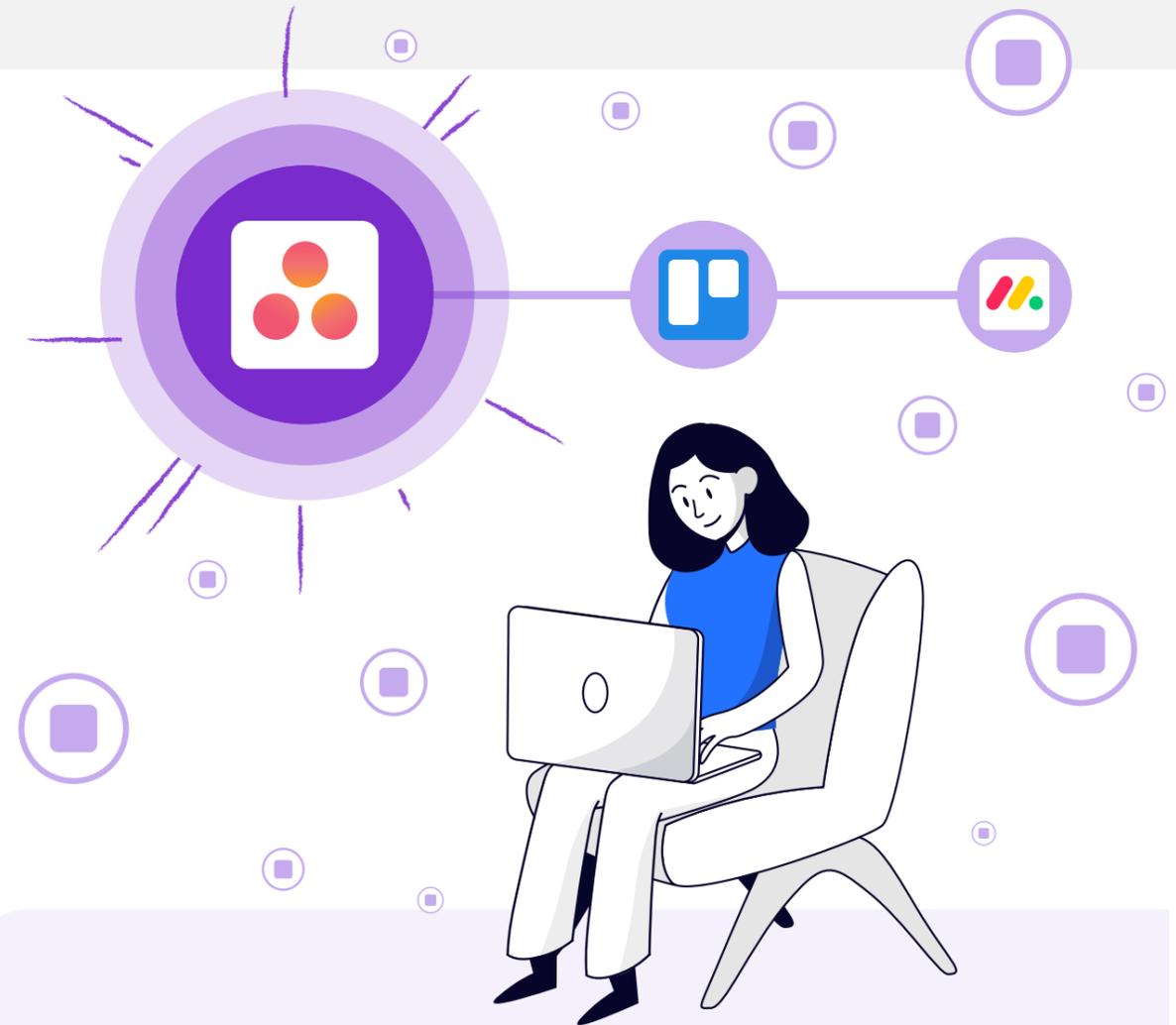
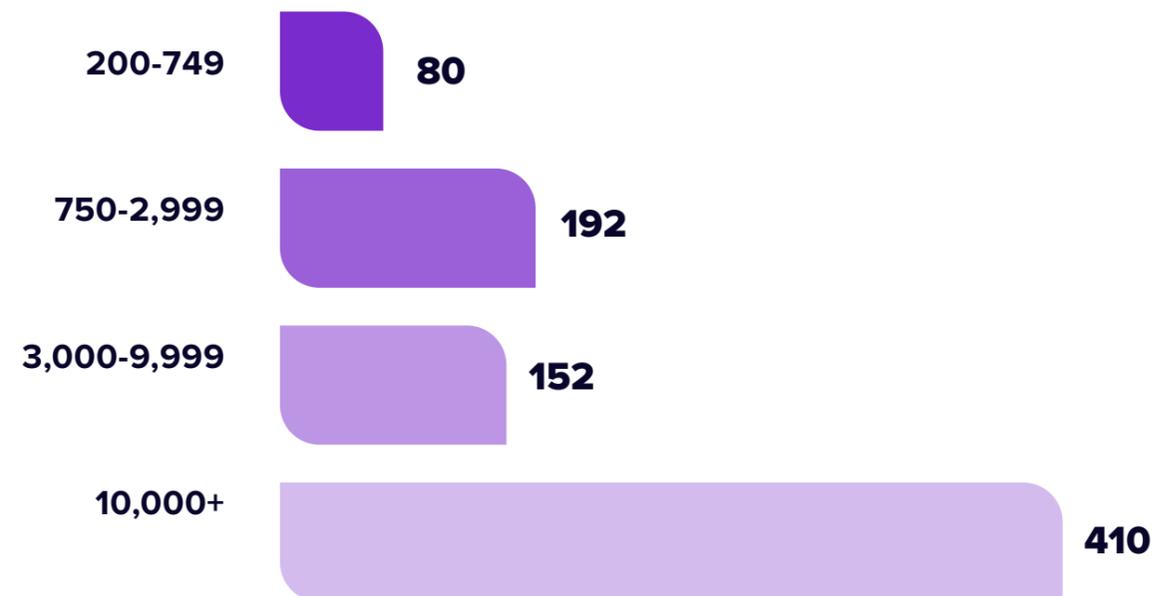


# Medium-sized enterprises drive growth of new SaaS apps

Medium-sized organizations are adding new SaaS apps at a faster clip than their larger counterparts, and account for most of the growth that we see in 2022.

Meanwhile, large enterprises are using an average of 410 apps this year, which is slightly lower than we saw in 2021. This is likely due to app and account consolidation, as organizations seek to optimize their existing SaaS portfolio and better control their SaaS sprawl.

**Number of SaaS apps by organization size**



**Change in number of SaaS apps used from 2021**  
*by company size*



# In coming years, all workplaces will be SaaS-powered

In recent years, the SaaS-Powered Workplace has emerged. These organizations run almost entirely on SaaS. However, most enterprises are working toward this—and eventually, all workplaces will be SaaS-powered. In this report, we divided our sample of nearly 750 respondents into three segments, all at different stages of SaaS maturity, to show how the digital workplace is evolving.

## SaaS-Powered Workplaces

Top 10% of study

**186**

Average number of SaaS apps

**96%**

of apps are SaaS-based

## Workplaces in Transition

Middle 80% of study

**121**

Average number of SaaS apps

**49%**

of apps are SaaS-based

## Traditional Workplaces

Bottom 10% of study

**44**

Average number of SaaS apps

**13%**

of apps are SaaS-based

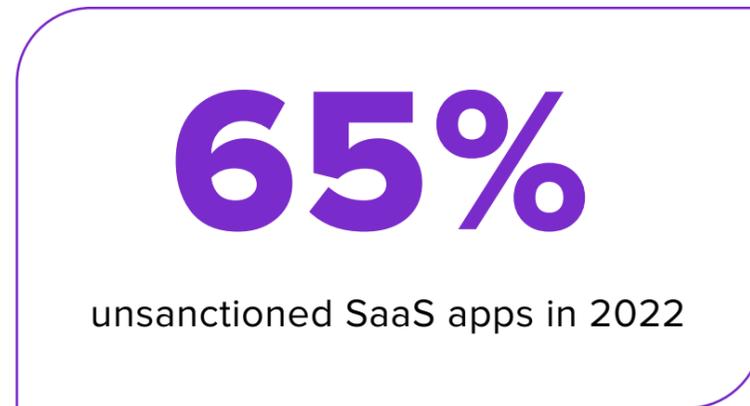
Because SaaS-Powered Workplaces are the furthest along in their digital transformation, their journeys reveal how SaaS operations changes over time. These trailblazers uncover new challenges, opportunities, and trends. As a result, other organizations can get a glimpse of what to expect as they adopt more SaaS apps.

# Emerging from the shadows of shadow IT

In 2022, **65%** of SaaS apps were unsanctioned—where users adopted apps without IT’s knowledge or approval.

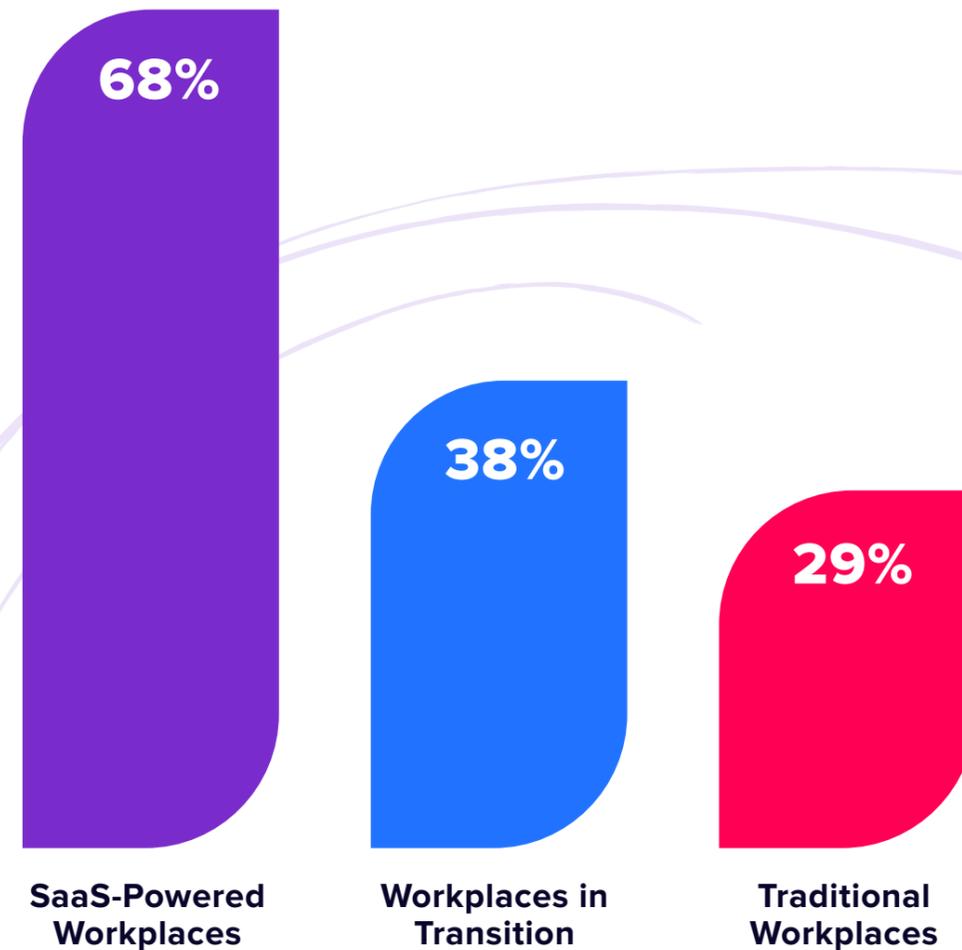
Shadow IT can create security risks, but it also creates system inefficiencies, especially when organizations are (unknowingly) using multiple apps that solve the same use case. Data lives in multiple disparate and siloed apps, and cost isn’t properly optimized.

This year, respondents at all types of organizations took a closer look at their SaaS portfolio and consolidated redundant/duplicative apps.



SaaS-Powered Workplaces lead the way: Nearly **70%** of them consolidated redundant SaaS apps in the past year. But even **29%** of Traditional Workplaces did the same. Consolidation is likely a contributing factor to the drop in yearly growth rate of SaaS apps, especially as IT teams sought to optimize their current portfolio.

## In last 12 months, IT consolidated redundant SaaS apps

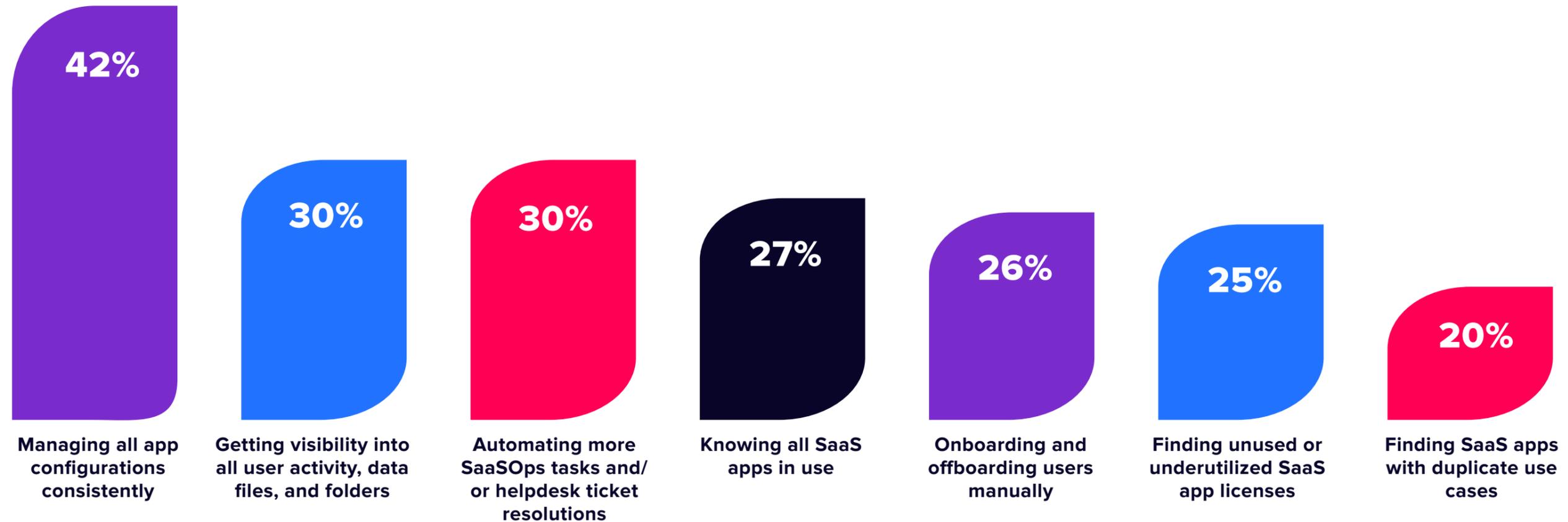


# The biggest challenges of managing a SaaS environment

SaaS apps come with countless settings and controls for users, groups, and files that enable users to collaborate easily. So it's no surprise that this year, **42%** of respondents said managing all app configurations consistently was the most crucial challenge to solve. IT must not only configure these settings when an application is first purchased, but they must also continually monitor them as employees add files, change group settings, and collaborate with external users.

The next most crucial challenges? Getting visibility into user activity and data, and automating more SaaS Ops tasks. Visibility is murky across disparate SaaS apps (who's sharing files publicly? What apps are employees using?). Without visibility, IT is blind to risks. And unsurprisingly, automating more manual tasks remains top of mind. Tedious, time-consuming operational tasks only multiply as SaaS adoption grows.

Challenges most crucial to solve in SaaS environments



\*Respondents were asked to select their top two challenges

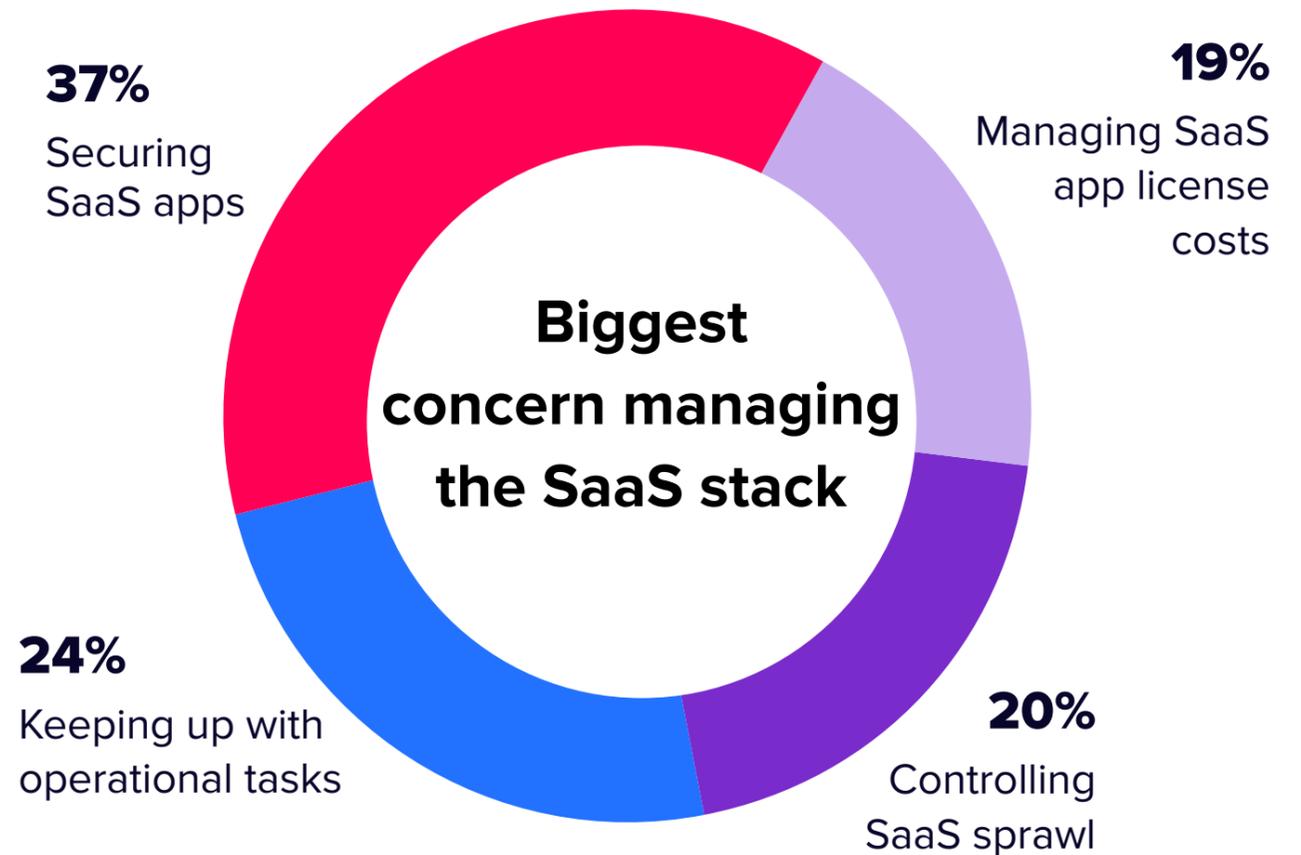


## Securing apps is the leading concern for most organizations

Managing SaaS environments comes with their share of challenges for IT. The leading concern for most organizations? Securing SaaS apps. This goes beyond security reviews for new software; it also includes securing user activity and their data, receiving alerts when inappropriate file sharing occurs, and remediating it properly.

Similarly, nearly a quarter (**24%**) of respondents were worried about their ability to keep up with the onslaught of operational tasks, and (**20%**) were worried about controlling SaaS sprawl.

In the next section, we'll explore these concerns in more detail. Why is securing SaaS apps the leading concern for most organizations? Why is SaaS sprawl difficult to control? And how do these challenges impact IT? We'll cover that—and more.





2

**SaaSOps in 2022:  
Security, Visibility, and  
Managing SaaS**



## IT has its share of SaaS security incidents in 2022

This year, **42%** of respondents said that securing user activities within SaaS apps was difficult. And it's no wonder: IT professionals had their share of security issues in 2022.

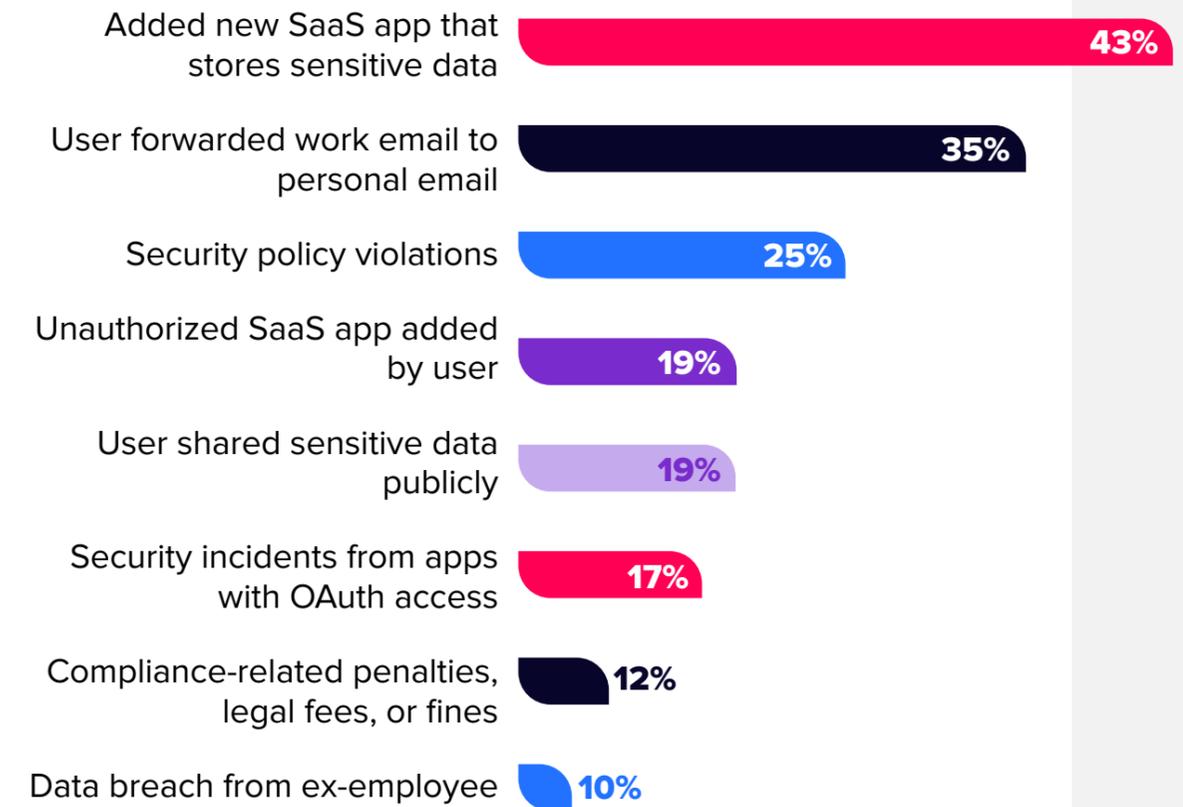
To begin with, the amount of sensitive data is rising. Nearly half (**43%**) of organizations added a new SaaS app that stored sensitive data. With more PII, customer information, and other types of sensitive data living across more apps, the stakes are now even higher for IT.

Additionally, another **35%** said users have forwarded work email to their personal email accounts. This leaves open questions of what exactly got forwarded and by who? Is it an employee who just gave two-week notice? Did they send themselves *your* intellectual property or customer list? These are all (potentially) very big security issues.

In addition to experiencing security policy violations, **19%** of respondents said they discovered the addition of unauthorized SaaS apps. While shadow IT can provide faster access to resources, it also introduces potential security risks like non-compliance, data loss/theft, and the possibility of data breaches. Additionally, in an age where sharing SaaS data can be done with a simple click of a button, it's not surprising that **19%** also reported instances of users sharing sensitive data publicly.

Our research also showed differences in SaaS security issues depending on how SaaS-forward an organization was. Nearly 20% of Traditional Workplaces had compliance-related penalties, legal fees, or fines, making them 9x more likely than SaaS-Powered Workplaces to suffer the financial consequences of poor SaaS data security.

### SaaS-related security issues in last 12 months



**42%**

say they have difficulties securing users' activities within SaaS apps



# The biggest SaaS security concern is insider threats, among others

## SaaS security is increasingly IT's responsibility: A whopping **81%** of respondents say that IT is responsible for protecting sensitive data within SaaS apps.

And with the significant responsibility of securing a constantly evolving SaaS environment, it's no wonder that IT is concerned about all aspects of SaaS security.

There are a few standouts, though. Overall, IT is most concerned about insider threats, regardless of whether it's due to malice or carelessness. Similarly, sensitive info that gets publicly shared is ranked second on the list. Accidental public link exposures happen all too often when users are trying to get work done and aren't paying attention to file settings (or aren't aware of the implications of their actions).

**81%**  
say that IT is responsible for protecting sensitive data within SaaS apps

The convenience of SaaS introduces real risk. Although it's never been easier for employees to save files in the cloud, it's also never been easier for them to share those files in risky ways. This creates a tremendous security challenge for IT teams to tackle. Add to the mix a lack of visibility into where sensitive data exists, unsanctioned apps, and excess admin privileges, and it's evident why security concerns persist.

### Top 9 biggest SaaS security concerns:

- 1 Insider threats, either malicious or negligent
- 2 Sensitive files shared publicly
- 3 Unsanctioned SaaS apps that store sensitive data
- 4 Not knowing where sensitive data exists
- 5 SaaS apps with read/write access to data
- 6 Excessive admin privileges
- 7 Sensitive emails forwarded to personal emails
- 8 Former employees still retaining data access
- 9 Groups or calendars shared publicly

*\*Respondents were asked to select their top two concerns*



# SaaS sprawl continues to make IT's job harder

Now that the average organization manages around 130 SaaS apps, **59%** agree that it's challenging to manage the sprawl, up from 54% last year.

Each SaaS app has its own data, files, users, and connected apps. And that continually grows into an enormous, ever-expanding sprawl with each new app, user, set of permissions, and file created. Understanding where data lives, who has access to it, and where it's exposed soon becomes a formidable task for IT.

Each new app also comes with its own configurations and definitions of permissions, adding up to no standardization in how IT manages it all.

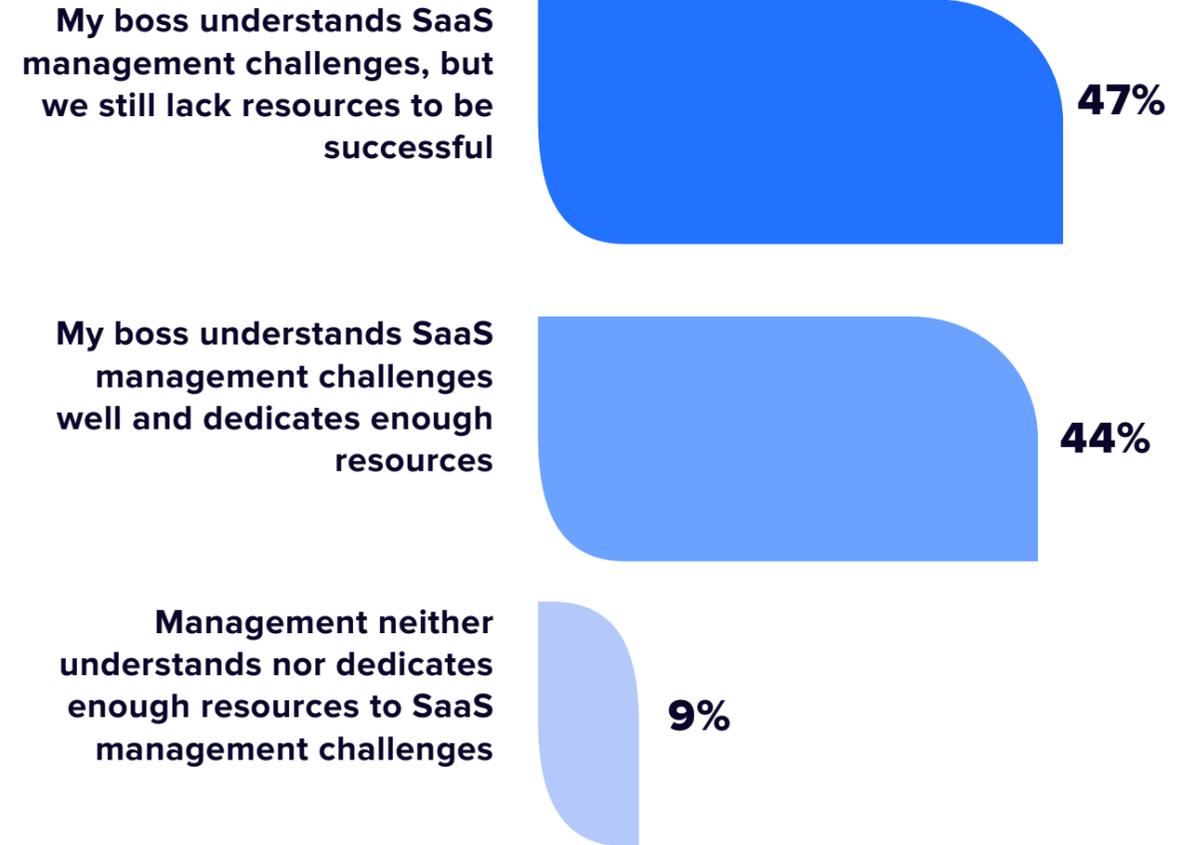
To make matters even more challenging, roughly half (**47%**) of respondents say they lack the resources needed to manage SaaS at scale, even though

To combat SaaS sprawl, IT is bringing more apps under their control.

**59%** have increased the number of SaaS apps that are managed and supported by IT in the past 12 months

their bosses understand the urgency. On the other hand, only **9%** of respondents say their management teams don't understand the need for additional resources.

Interestingly, back in 2018, our research showed that only **22%** of IT professionals said their managers understood SaaS management challenges. Today in 2022, that number has risen to **91%**, illustrating how salient, pervasive, and urgent these challenges have become.



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SaaSops in 2022: Security, Visibility, and Managing SaaS

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## Onboarding and providing access on Day 1 is also a challenge for IT



It's critical to get new employees the tools they need on Day 1, but most of our respondents say their onboarding process takes too long.

**51%** say it takes more than a day to get a new employee access to the tools they need to do the job. Another **35%** say it takes more than a week.

When frustrating delays like this happen, a new employee doesn't get the experience they deserve. The organization also suffers from lost productivity because employees go far too long without getting access to the SaaS apps they need to get the job done.

# 86%

Organizations who say new employees lacked access to the necessary tools to do their jobs on Day 1

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SaaSops in 2022: Security, Visibility, and Managing SaaS

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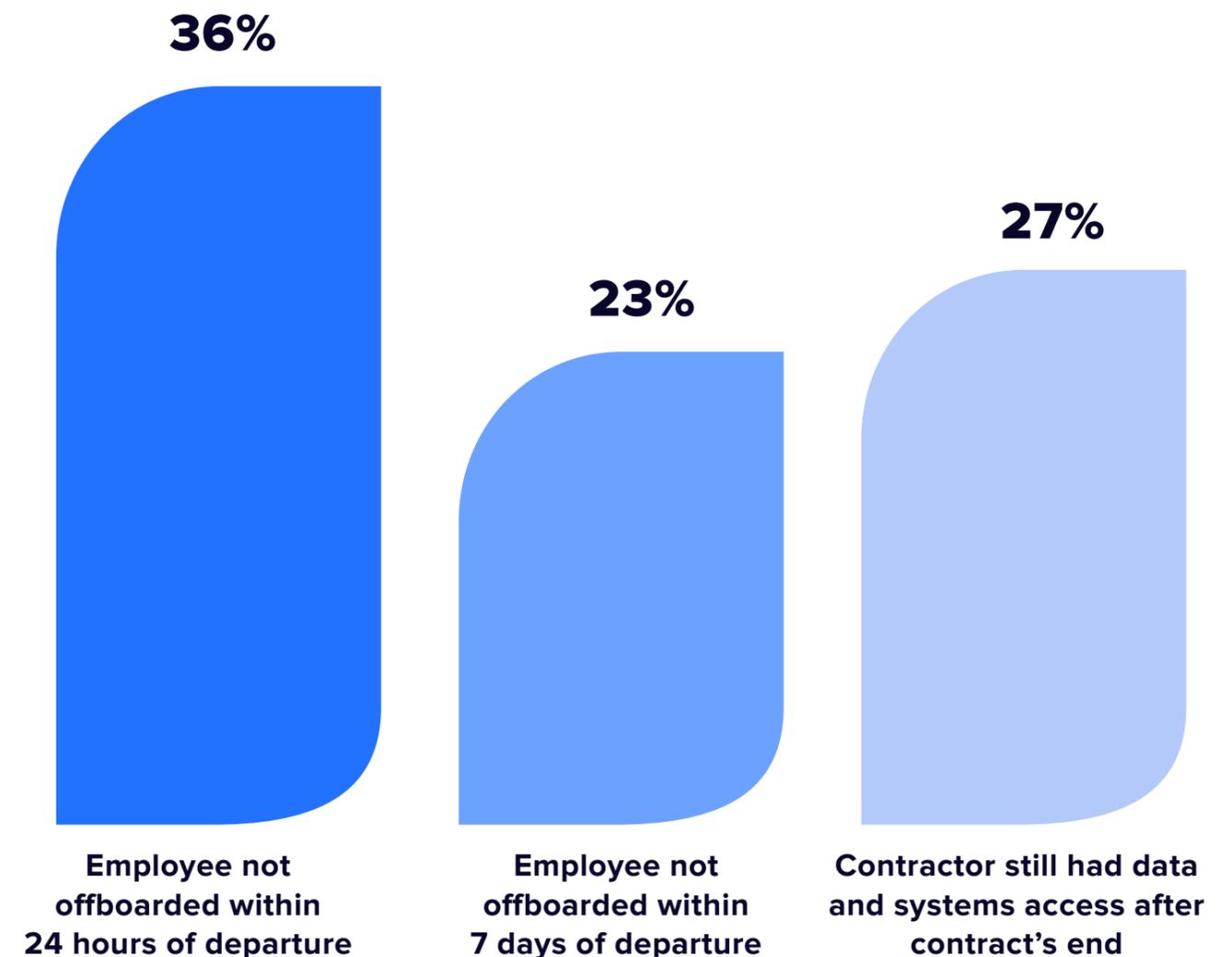
## Not all departing employees and contractors are being offboarded quickly enough

More than a third (**36%**) of respondents say departing employees were not offboarded within 24 hours of leaving the organization. An additional **23%** say that an exiting employee still wasn't completely offboarded within a week after their departure. And another **27%** said contractors still had access to business systems after they completed their projects.

Delayed offboarding creates a host of issues for IT. For example, a departing user may be joining your biggest competitor, or perhaps they want to seek revenge after a bitter end to their tenure. These—and many other scenarios—open up endless possibilities for your data to be stolen or destroyed, or for permissions to be shared with rogue actors.

The risks that come with slow or improper offboarding are preventable. By automating the offboarding process, IT can set up automated workflows that kick off as soon as a ticket or form is submitted. These workflows can deprovision users from all their SaaS apps as soon as they depart, in addition to locking and wiping the user's device, setting up email auto-responders, and transferring their files to their manager for work continuity.

### Offboarding employees or contractors in the last 12 months





## Effective automation starts with visibility

When it comes to operational efficiency gains from automation, **64%** of organizations say current levels of visibility are limiting.

Complete visibility into a SaaS environment is the foundation of security, but it also supports operational efficiency.

Without knowing what apps employees use, where data is stored, who has access to it, or how often apps are used, it's impossible to efficiently and effectively manage it all.

Even if you have some visibility, it's usually only enough to know what needs to be done, but not *how* to automate the process.

Visibility and insights are key for effective SaaSops automation. Without them, you can't reap the full benefits of automation, like time-saving operational efficiency and better data security.

In the next section, we'll dive more deeply into all things SaaSops automation: its massive impact, the most commonly automated processes, and the strategic projects IT teams are working on by automating more.

### Statement best describing your SaaS environment's visibility

Complete visibility and insight make it easy to automate actions

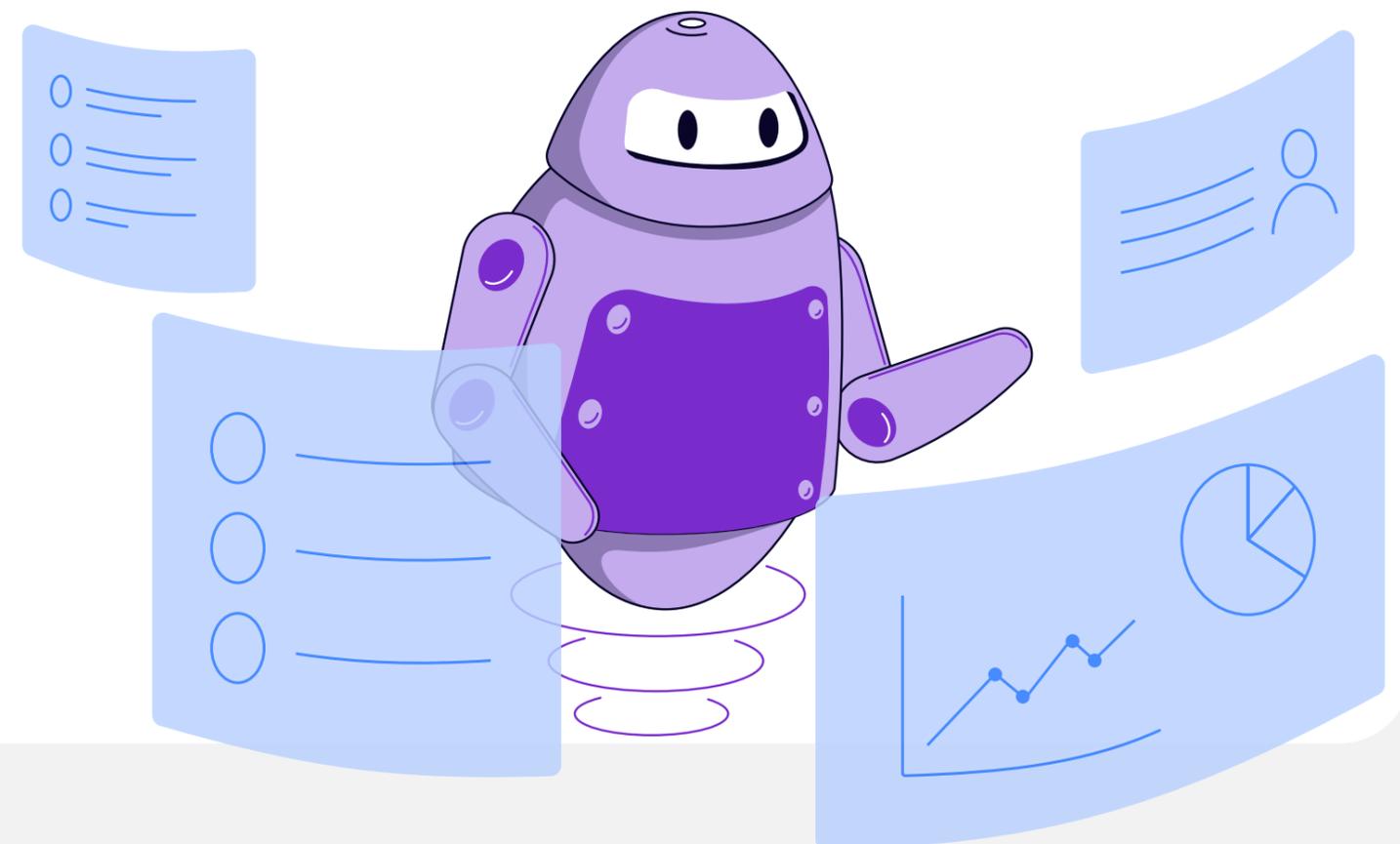
20%

Enough visibility and insights to know how to take action, but not enough to automate them

64%

Insufficient visibility and insight slow us from taking action

16%



**3**

**Improving Efficiency  
with SaaS Ops Automation**

## Automation is crucial to effectively managing SaaS

As respondents told us in the previous section of this report, it's impossible to automate the actions you need to take without visibility into your SaaS environment.

At the same time, IT tells us resoundingly that automation is important to effective SaaS management. Between managing SaaS sprawl, licenses, security risks, and ULM processes like on- and offboarding, there comes a point where it's impossible for IT to do it all manually.

Regardless of how many SaaS apps they use, workplaces of all types agree that automation is critical to managing SaaS environments. Even the majority of Traditional Workplaces know it, and nearly all (96%) SaaS-Powered Workplaces concur too.

“The future of SaaS Ops is bright as heck — automation, security minded, and business strategy-focused.”

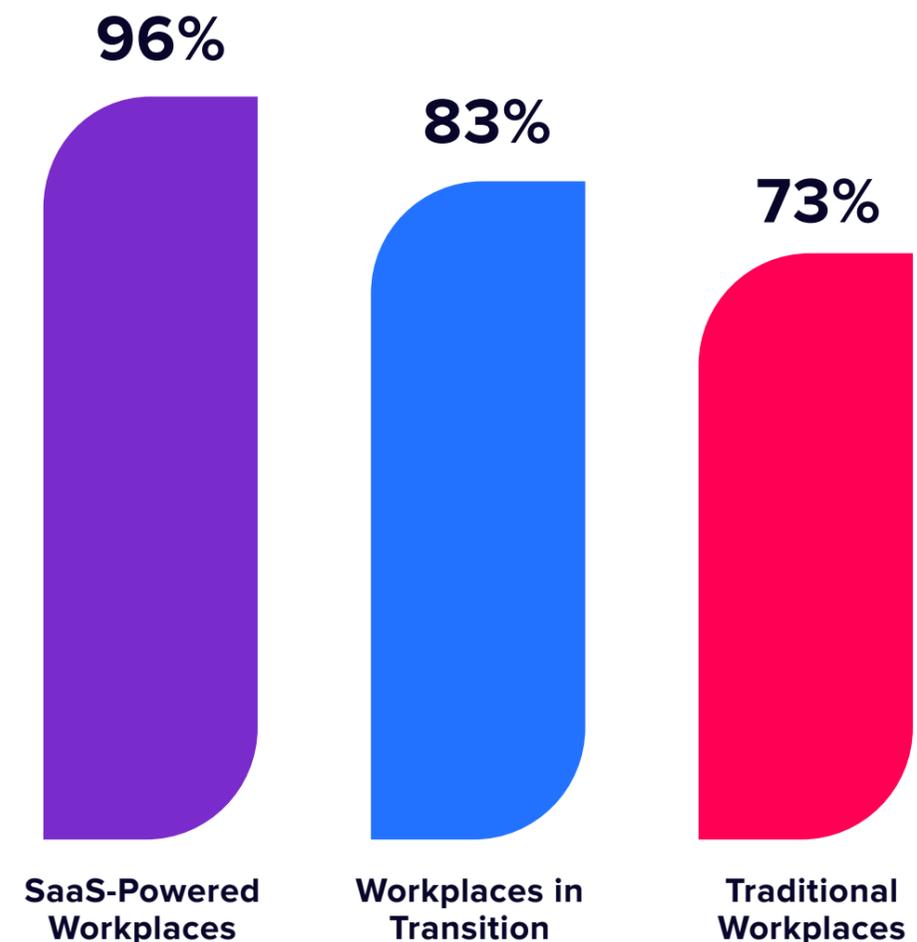
Head of IT at SaaS company with 50 employees

“The future of SaaS Ops is likely automation and efficiencies.”

CISO at telecommunications company with 20,000 employees

### Importance of automation to effective management of SaaS environment

% say important/very important



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Improving Efficiency with SaaS Ops Automation

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## The impact of (not) having visibility into your SaaS environment

Without automated visibility into their SaaS environment, IT is operating in the dark. Below are the top 5 biggest challenges from lack of automated visibility and insight into SaaS environments, according to respondents:

- 1 **Takes too long to manually solve problems**
- 2 **Can't easily identify file security risks**
- 3 **Hard to make sure automated workflows execute as planned**
- 4 **Inability to control SaaS license costs**
- 5 **Don't know how to remediate security incidents**

This data sheds some light on why automation is so critical for effective SaaS operations. It's no surprise that manually solving issues is inefficient—and expensive—for IT. And with automated visibility, problem solving becomes easier and more efficient. But automated visibility and insights also help mitigate file security risks, control license costs, and ensure that workflows execute properly—all key elements of an organization's overall SaaS operations practice.



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Improving Efficiency with SaaS Ops Automation

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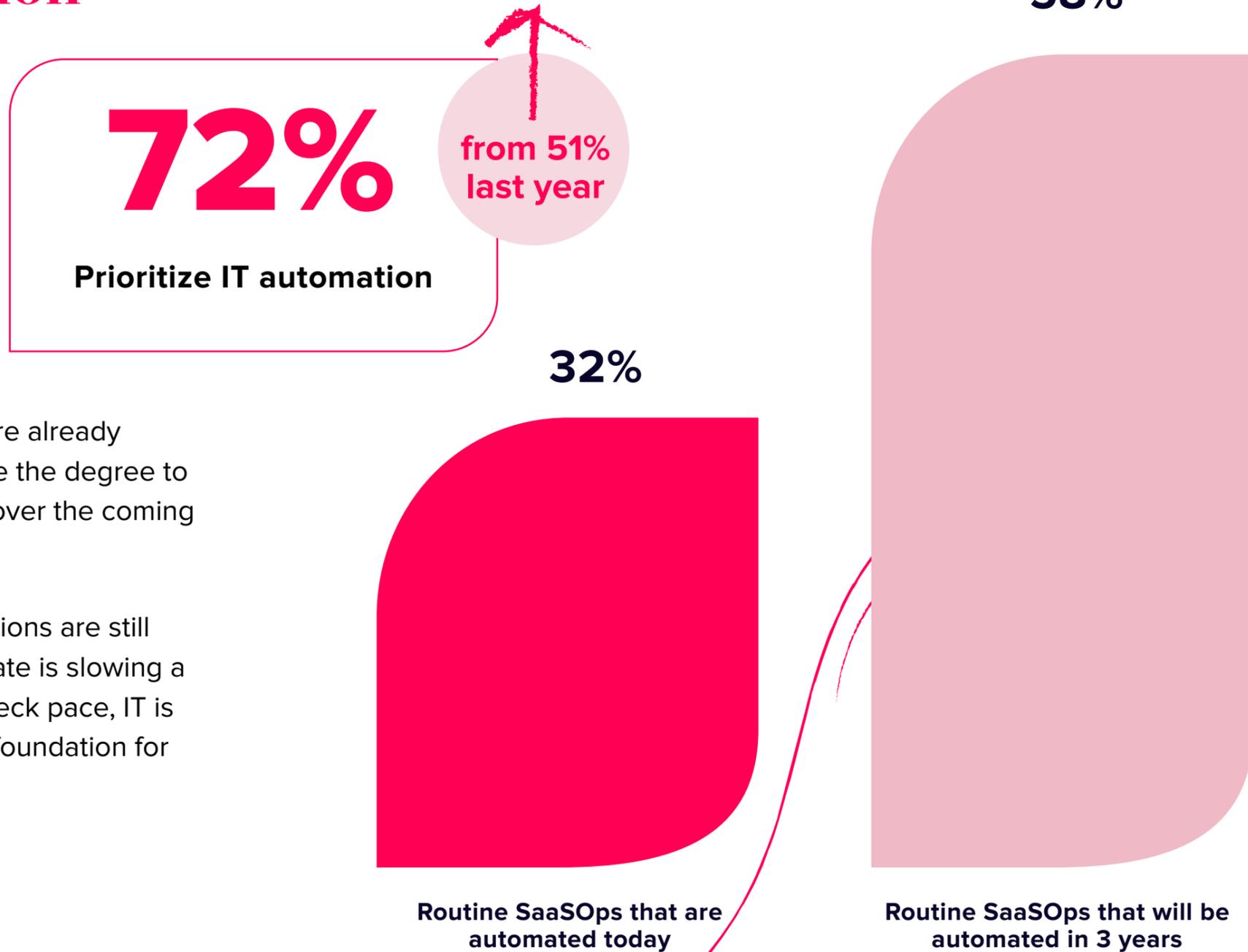


## A majority of IT teams are prioritizing automation

This year, **72%** of respondents said they're prioritizing IT automation—and *everyone* we heard from is working toward it. This is up substantially from last year's 51%. Increasingly, organizations are working to reap the full benefits of IT automation and do more with less.

Overall, respondents reported that about a third of their routine SaaS Ops processes are already automated. And they expect to nearly double the degree to which their SaaS operations are automated over the coming years.

As we learned earlier in the report, organizations are still using more SaaS than ever, but the growth rate is slowing a bit. After years of SaaS adoption at a breakneck pace, IT is doubling down on automation to set a solid foundation for managing apps in a scalable way.



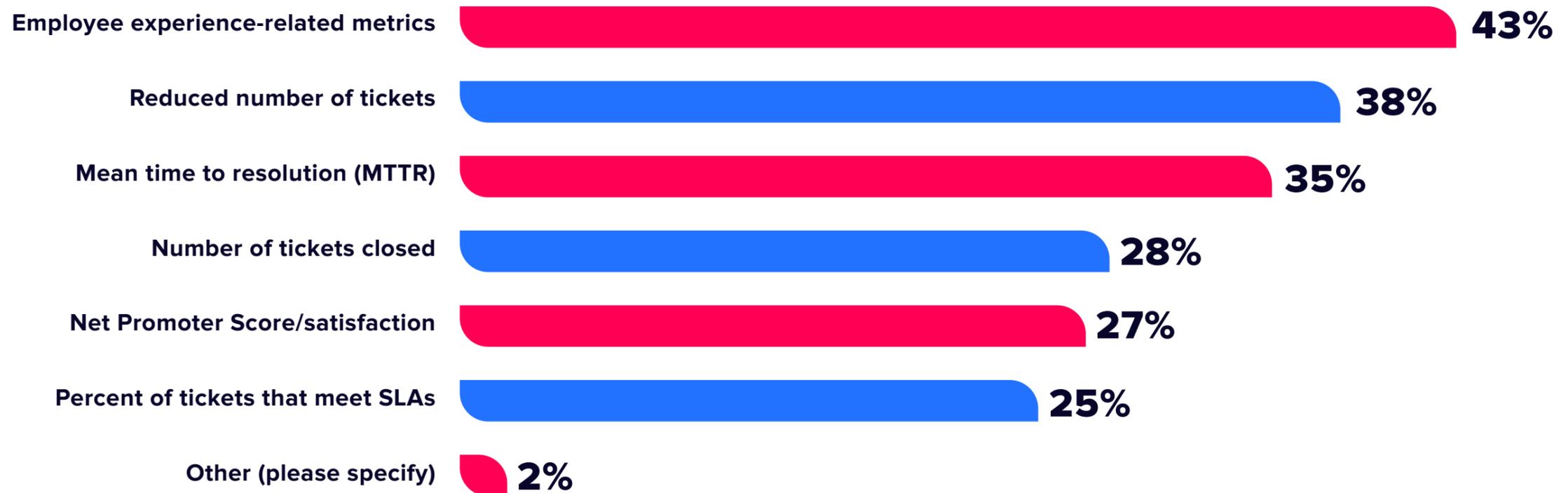
# Automation can help improve the top 2 most important IT metrics: employee experience and number of tickets

It's no secret that IT can dramatically improve the employee experience with automation—and employee experience-related metrics are their most critical measure of success now.

Respondents also told us that reducing the volume of help desk tickets and mean time to resolution (MTTR) are among the most important metrics they track.

By automating tasks such as password resets and granting access to groups or calendars, IT teams of all sizes can dramatically reduce the number of tickets in their queues. A SaaSops mindset also enables employees to be more productive and efficient, while reclaiming valuable time for IT to focus on more strategic initiatives.

## Most important IT metrics



*\*Respondents were asked to select their top two metrics*



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Improving Efficiency with SaaS Ops Automation

# Automating help desk ticket resolutions is a big initiative

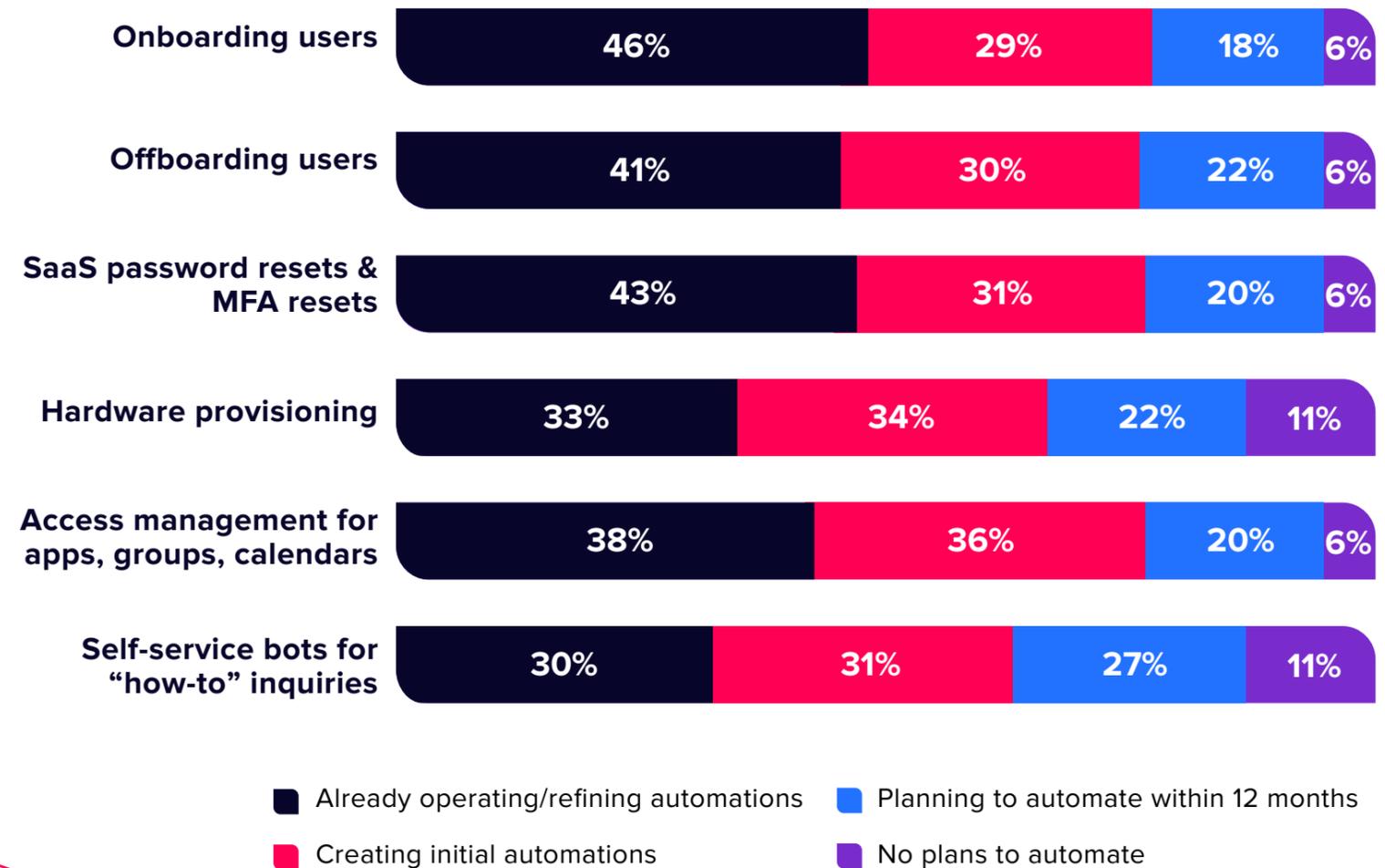
As IT works to improve its success metrics, they're increasingly automating ticket resolutions.

Since it's directly related to employee experience, it's no surprise that onboarding is the most commonly automated process. **46%** of respondents said automated onboarding is already in place, and another **29%** are creating initial automations for it. But password/MFA resets and offboarding aren't far behind.

In contrast, only **30%** have already automated self-service bots for "how-to" inquiries. Self-service bots can automatically help solve issues that would normally require a ticket.

Looking to the future, IT has big plans over the next year. Nearly **95%** of respondents expect to have onboarding, offboarding, or password resets automated in some capacity in the next 12 months, with even more ticket types to follow.

Automation status of help desk tickets for...



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## Embracing a SaaSops mentality allows IT to support a larger number of end users

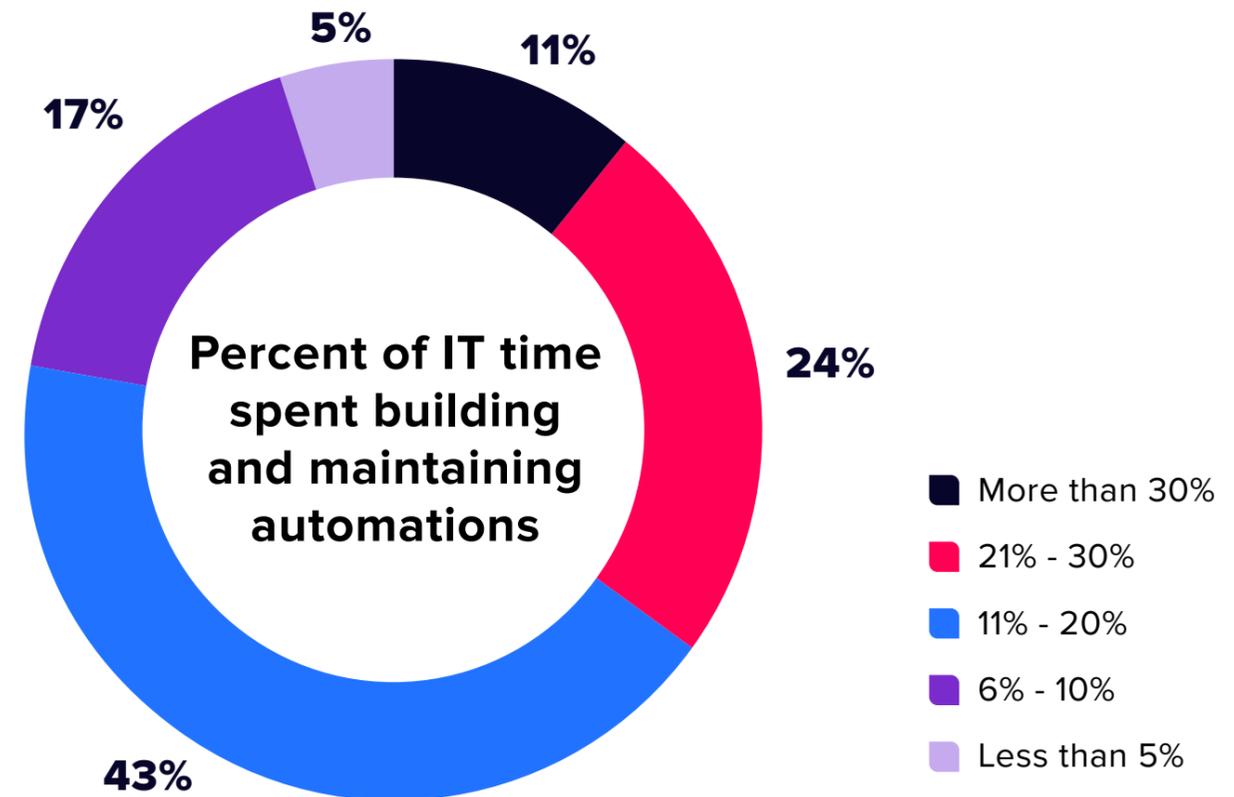
In addition to happier employees and faster help desk ticket resolutions, time spent on building and automating tasks pays several other dividends. For example, it allows IT to support a larger number of end users and be more efficient.

Let's compare IT ratios (IT employee : end users) for different types of workplaces. SaaS-Powered Workplaces have one IT person for every 83 employees. Workplaces in Transition have one for every 63, and Traditional Workplaces have one for every 59.

This makes SaaS-Powered Workplaces about 30% more efficient. Their heavy reliance on SaaS and effective use of SaaSops automation makes this happen.

Organizations understand automation is critical for increased efficiency. It's why more than a third (**35%**) report that at least one-fifth of IT's time is spent building and maintaining automations.

IT ratios for each type of workplace



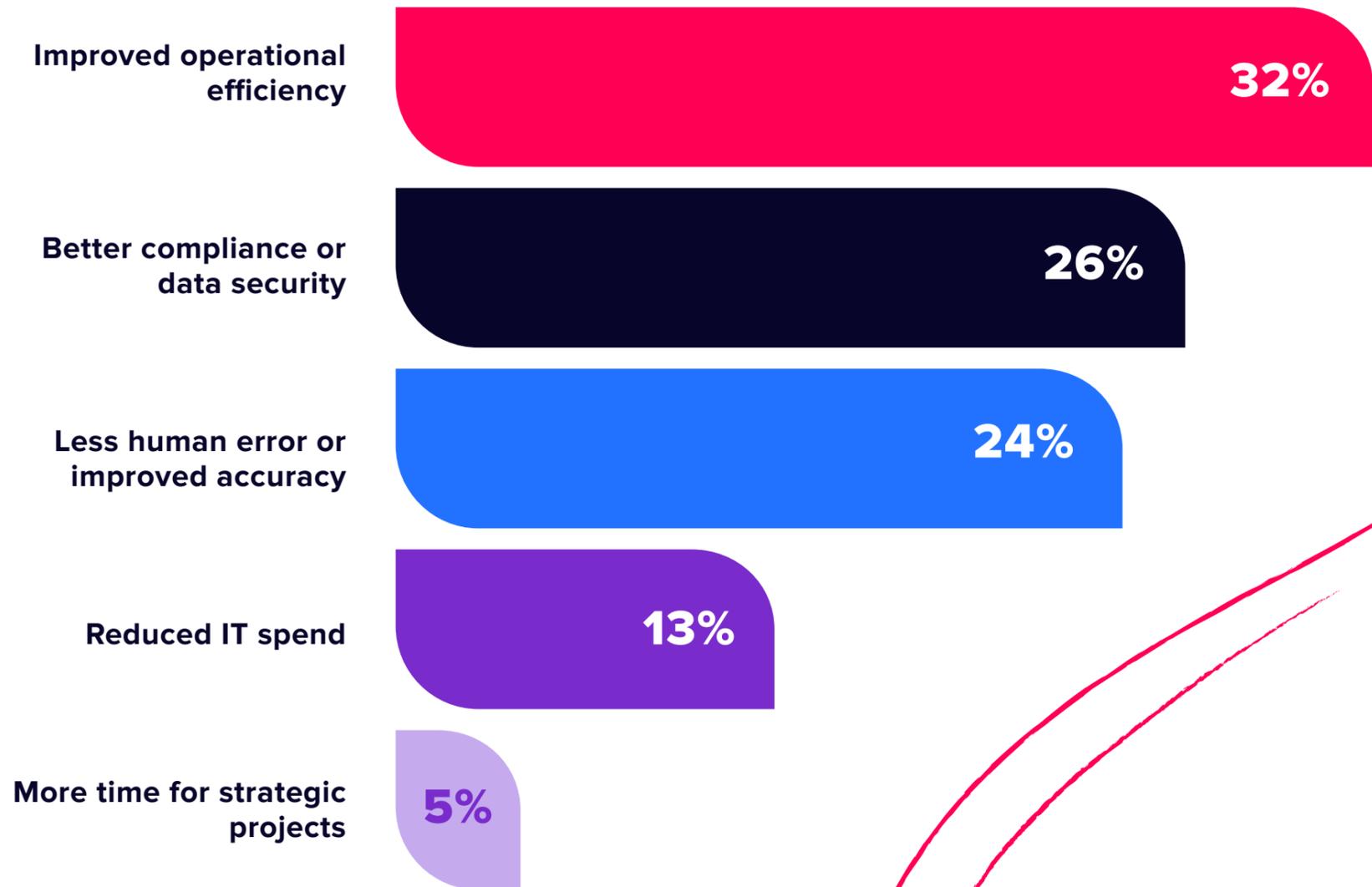


## SaaSops automation delivers on its efficiency promise

Similarly, this year nearly a third (**32%**) of IT professionals cited **improved operational efficiency** as the top benefit from automating SaaS management. In other words, they're able to do much more with fewer (manual) resources. They can run leaner and deliver increased time savings, cost efficiencies, and value to the organization at large.

Additionally, **26%** of respondents cited better compliance or data security as a top benefit of automating SaaS management. In a world where it's not feasible to manually find sensitive data among thousands of documents, or manually monitor them to prevent public exposure, automation can quickly and easily keep sensitive data safe.

### Top benefit from automating SaaS management



# Automation also frees up IT for more interesting work

Here's what respondents told us they've done, are doing, or would like to do with that extra time:

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Improving Efficiency with SaaS Ops Automation

## Better employee experience

"Work on our Knowledge Base to empower customers to use self-service."

"More innovative solutions across the board for a better personal touch."

"Improving end user experience."

"We would like to explore more chatbot self service."

## Data analysis/integrity

"Syncing user data across all SaaS platforms so we have consistency throughout."

"Build additional tools for visibility and reporting for management."

"More time dedicated to analytics to assess which areas will give the most value to the business by automating."

"Providing data secrecy and reliability."

## Automating even more

"Automate onboarding using HR sources like Workday."

"Find more things to automate."

"Automating hardware management."

"Understand and dive deeper into zero-touch automation."

"Automate security tools."

"Improve and automate system uptime visibility across the organization."

## Optimizing the help desk

"Close service tickets more expediently."

"Optimize ticket routing."

## Migration & modernization

"Working towards technology consolidation by retiring legacy apps and onboarding cloud-based solutions."

"More research time for new/replacement applications and modernization."

"More cloud migration of on-prem systems."

"Security training."

## Security & audits

"We'd like to pursue going passwordless throughout the organization as we believe that will be the future of cybersecurity."

"Additional security hardening efforts (MFA, Zero Trust, IAM)"

"Implementing zero trust models and CSPM."

"Perform more security audits."

"Cloud-based DR."

## Becoming a strategic business partner

"Our goal is to free up our internal IT to provide better support and manage projects related to the business."

"Discover new ways IT can provide value to the business."

## Improving IT efficiency & costs

"Deploy more tools and time-saving strategies."

"Reducing cost where applicable."

"Data-driven business operation efficiency projects."

## Better quality of life

"Gaining work/life balance."

**29%** of respondents wrote that they'd automate more, making this the top response to the question



**4**

**Investments in SaaS Ops:  
Teams, Talent, and Tools**

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Investments in SaaS Ops: Teams, Talent, and Tools

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## There's a growing commitment to the SaaS Ops framework as a greater number of organizations say they invest enough in it

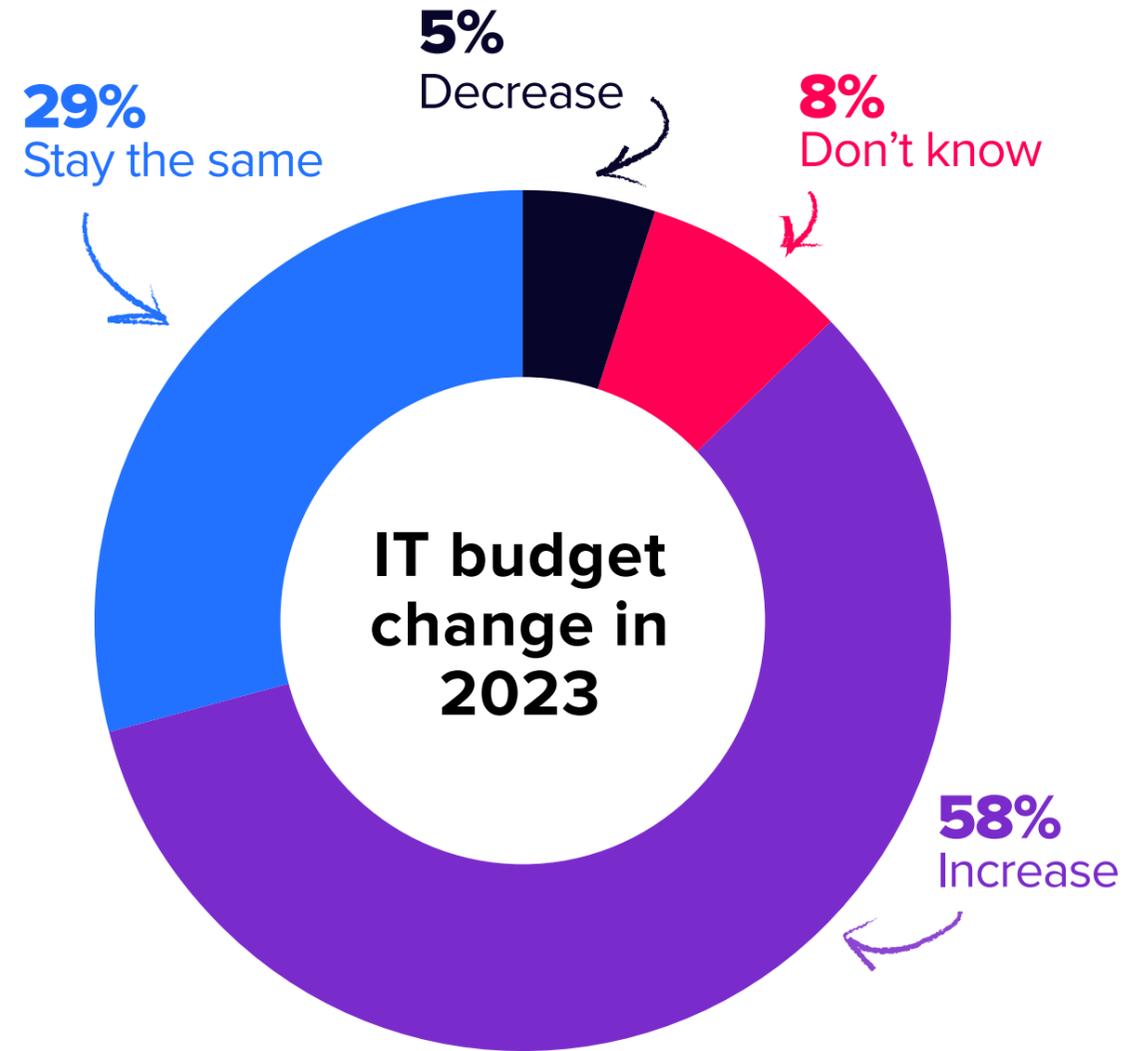
As we learned earlier, roughly half of respondents say that they have the resources to effectively manage their SaaS environment. Up from 48% last year, nearly 60% say their organization invests enough to protect data within SaaS apps.

Bucking current economic trends, relatively few expect to cut IT budgets. In fact, **58%** predict their budgets will increase, and **29%** say theirs will stay the same.

It's clear that there's a growing consensus. The right investments in technology, coupled with effective management of those tools, are key to weathering an economic storm.

**58%** from 48% last year

say their organization invests enough to protect data within SaaS apps



# The rise of dedicated SaaSops teams and automation skill specialization

There are two schools of thought on how to build automation skills.

The first one is to encourage all IT team members to learn—essentially embracing a philosophy that “Automating is everyone’s job.” **16%** of respondents say they adopt this mindset.

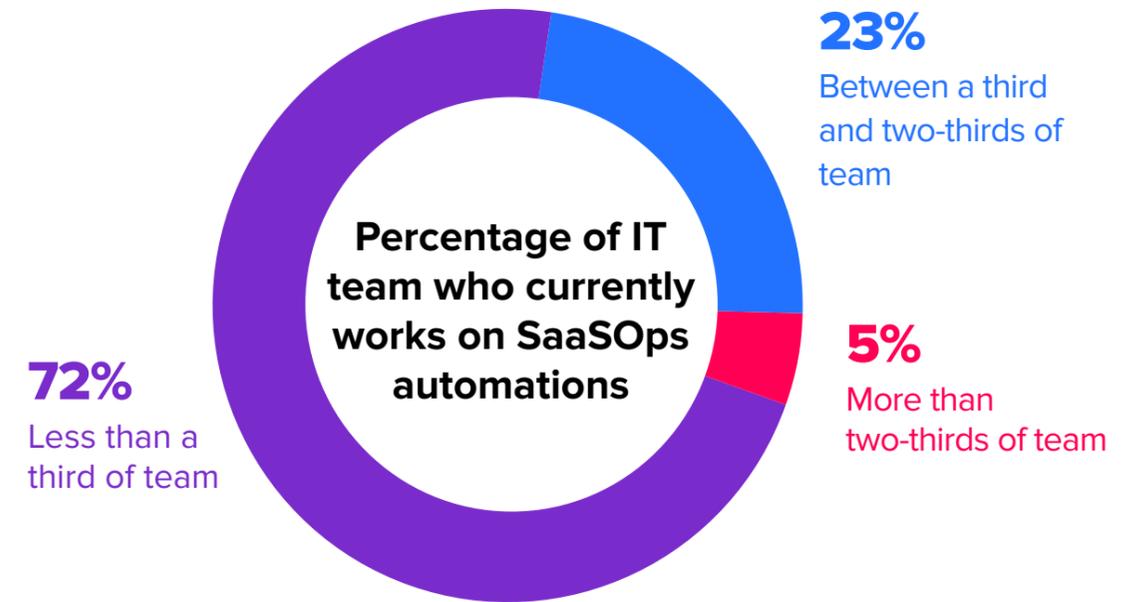
The other approach is to create a dedicated role or team solely focusing on SaaSops automation. Two-thirds (**66%**) say they either have one now or will in the near future. These roles are primarily responsible for developing and managing automated workflows.

Building a dedicated SaaS automation team is likely going to be the dominant way to organize and develop automation specialists.

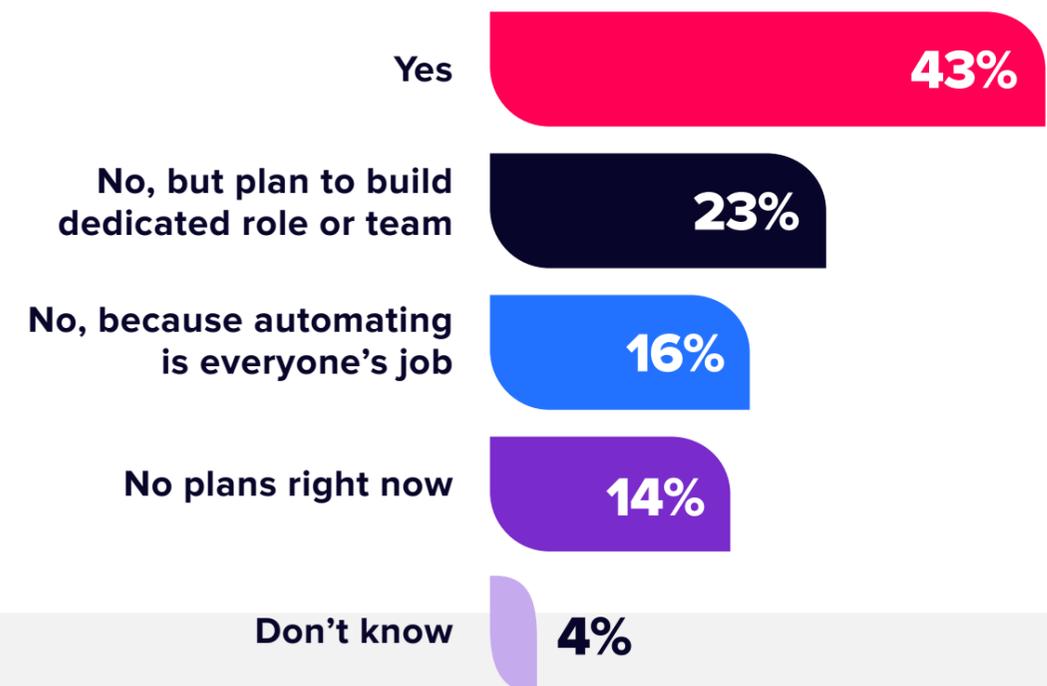
So what percentage of IT teams currently works on SaaSops automations?

Currently, the vast majority of respondents, at **72%**, said that less than a third of their team members do. That share may increase as organizations adopt more SaaS and optimize their existing SaaS portfolio, and the need for automation specialists rises.

“SaaSops will become more and more critical for our org as we move in-house tools to SaaS platforms. This will open up positions and resources to manage SaaS tools.”  
Senior IT systems administrator at SaaS company with 3,000 employees



## Dedicated SaaSops automation role or team



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Investments in SaaS Ops: Teams, Talent, and Tools

## There's a growing (and widespread) need for SaaS Ops professionals

Overall, there's an enormous increase in organizations who already use the term "SaaS Ops" in a job title or job description. Last year, it was **18%**. This year, it's climbed to **41%**. There's probably no better indicator demonstrating how SaaS operations is becoming an accepted IT speciality than this recent growth.

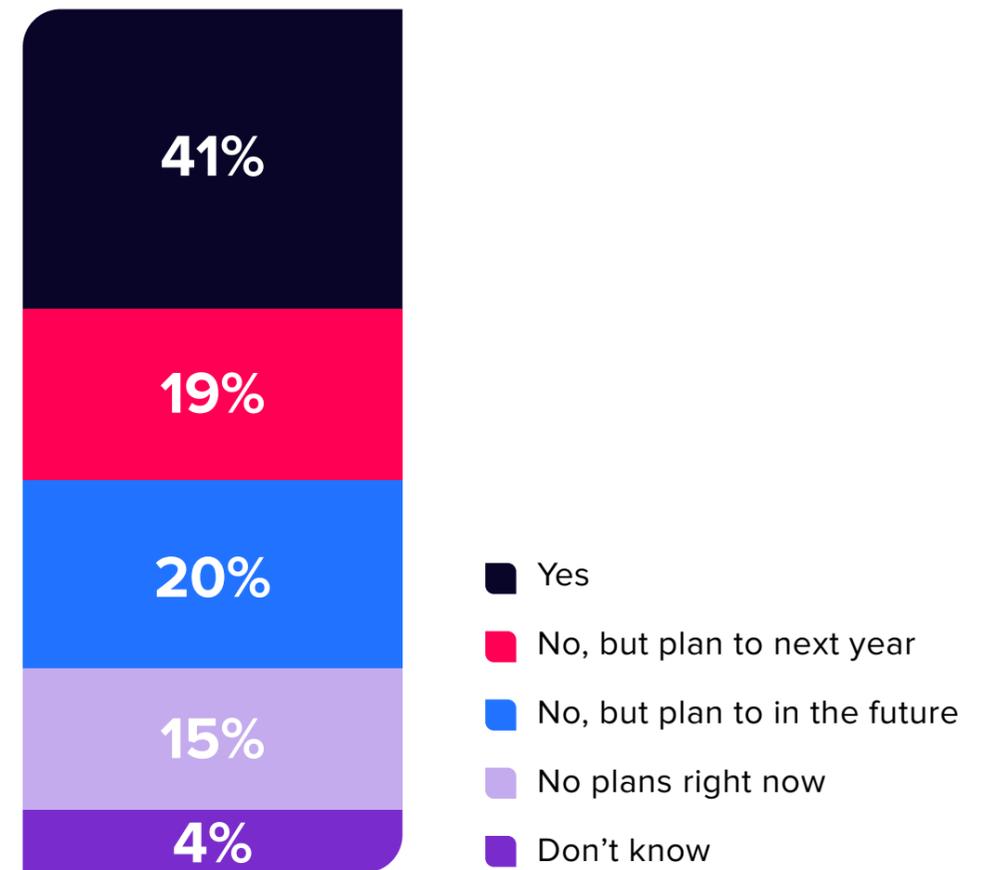
Clearly, SaaS Ops is here to stay. It's already become a necessary role in many IT departments, and is on the way to becoming one in the future for many others.

Without these critical skills, it's impossible to know which apps make up your SaaS environment, or how to secure data while ensuring high levels of productivity, or how to automate and optimize your SaaS environment.

“To us, SaaS Ops is an expanding role with increasing viability.”  
**Senior director of IT at consumer electronics company with 900 employees**

“The future of SaaS Ops is increased visibility and adoption within many businesses as we aim to reduce manual overhead and drive value.”  
**Senior IT manager at education company with 7,500 employees**

SaaS Ops in job title and/or description





# Mergers and acquisitions can also drive SaaS Ops investment priorities

When organizations get bought (or buy another company), it always means change for IT and SaaS Ops priorities.

This year, about 12% of respondents are being bought by another organization, and another 13% are buying or merging with another organization.

Mergers and acquisitions bring a variety of challenges when it's time to integrate multiple IT environments. And respondents tell us they have two equal priorities during M&A time: Visibility into the new acquisition's SaaS environment is equally important as migrating new employees to their infrastructure.

## Biggest SaaS Ops priority for mergers and/or acquisitions

Migrate acquired employees to acquiring company infrastructure

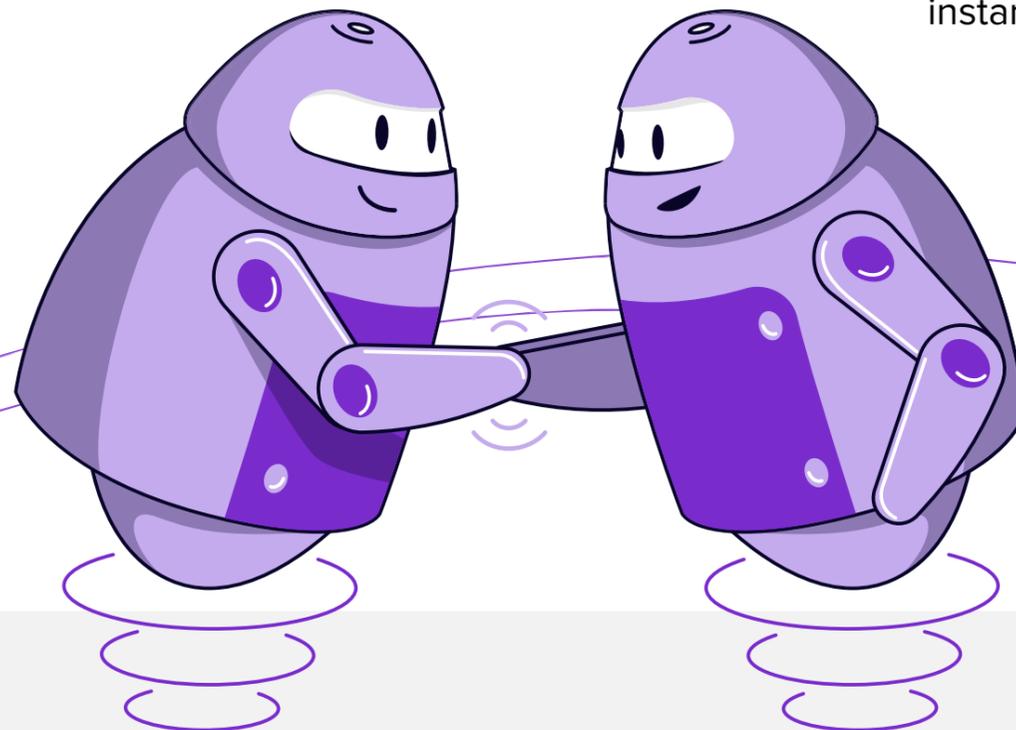
40%

Get visibility across acquired company's SaaS environment

40%

Apply uniform policies across multiple instances

20%



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Investments in SaaS Ops: Teams, Talent, and Tools

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# Organizations are investing heavily in SaaS management platforms (SMPs)

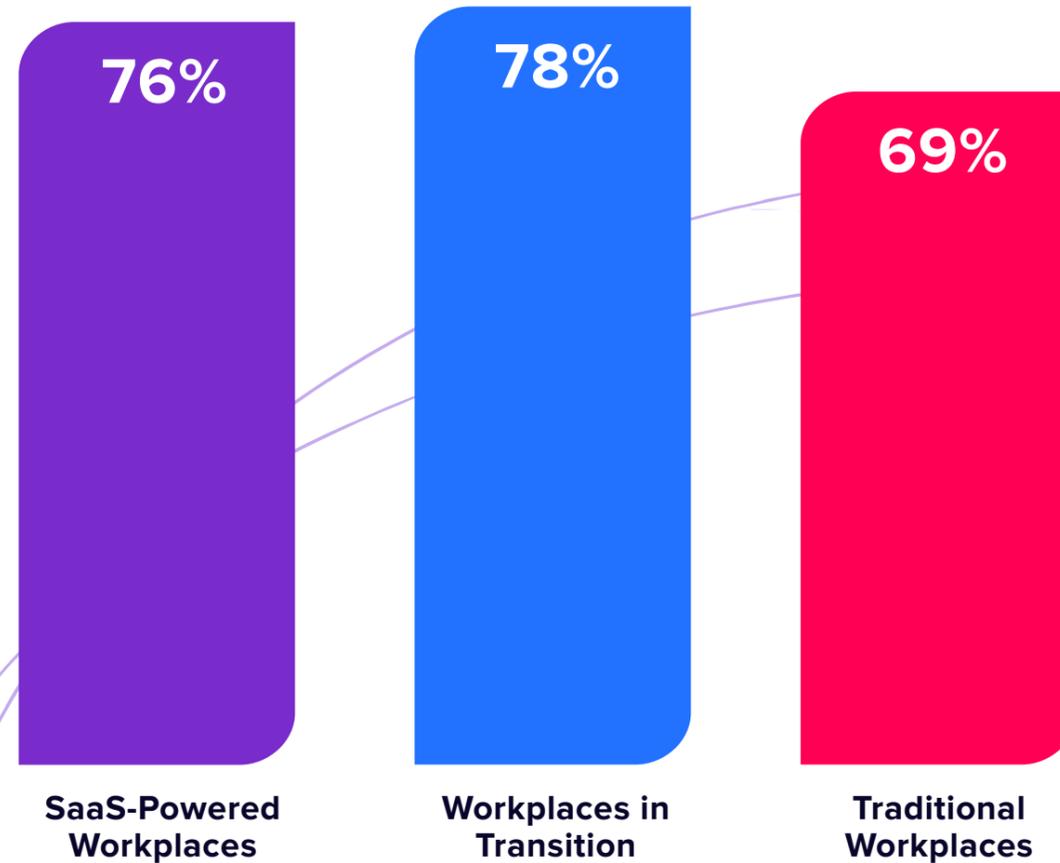
Most respondents already or will soon use a SaaS management platform (SMP). In total, more than three-quarters of respondents plan to do so in the coming year.

Organizations of all types see the need for an SMP.

Traditional Workplaces—organizations that are early on in their SaaS adoption journey—may use an SMP to automate processes solely in one or two SaaS apps at first. As they adopt more SaaS apps, Workplaces in Transition may want an SMP to get better visibility and automate on- and offboarding across a growing tech stack.

And SaaS-Powered Workplaces, which are very heavily reliant on SaaS apps, can use an SMP to optimize licenses, secure sensitive data, automate ULM processes, and work toward zero-touch automation across their entire SaaS environment.

Very likely or likely to use an SMP within year

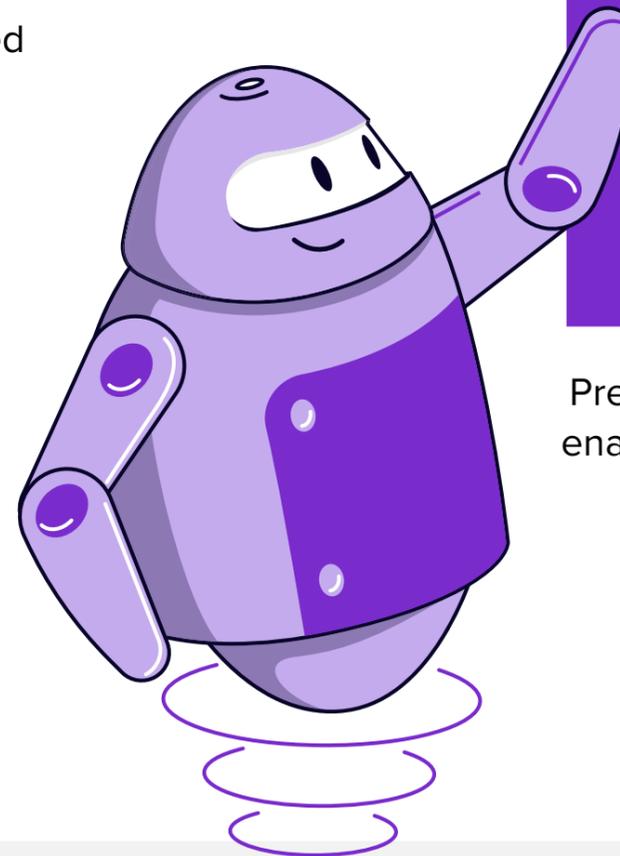


## SMP functionality for automation is especially crucial to IT

Building and managing automated workflows doesn't need to be complex. But to do so successfully, IT needs fast and easy access to relevant insights about apps, users, data, alerts, and workflows. For example, how much sensitive data does an organization have publicly shared? Which applications are employees logging into, perhaps without IT's knowledge? Which former employees still have access to their organization's systems and data? Which applications haven't been used recently?

As we learned earlier, **46%** of respondents said they lacked the insight and visibility to automate effectively. It makes sense, then, that **75%** of respondents prefer solutions that gives them the insight they need to quickly build and manage automations.

Additionally, **78%** want flexibility to create completely custom automations, where organizations aren't limited by the number of pre-built integrations or pre-defined triggers to kick off workflows. This way, a tool like an SMP can support a wider range of applications, actions, and use cases to empower IT teams to build new and better workflows for virtually any task.



75%

Prefers solutions that enable insights-driven automation

78%

Prefers SaaS management platforms that enable completely custom automation

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Investments in SaaSOps: Teams, Talent, and Tools

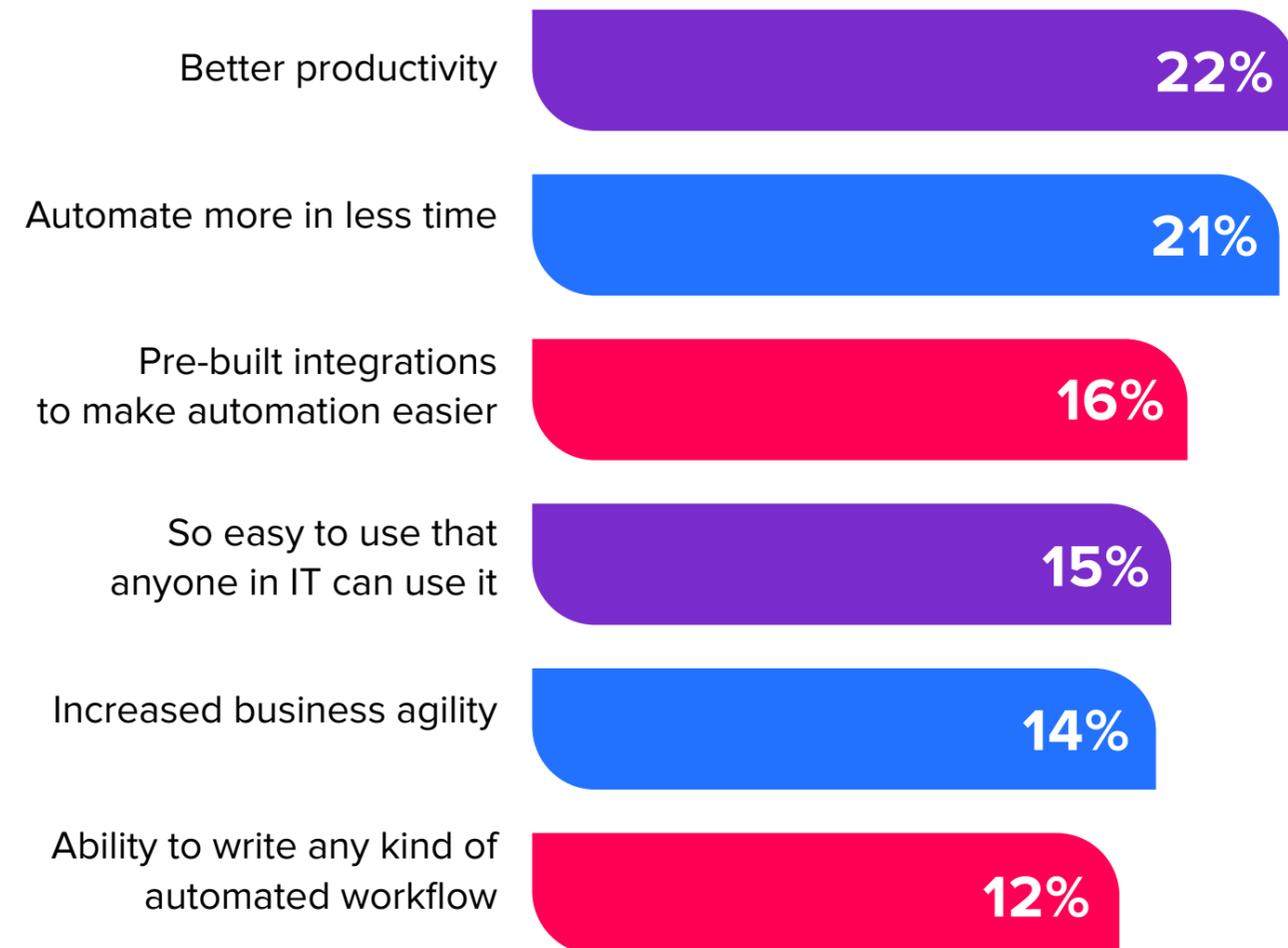
## No-code SMPs make SaaSOps even easier and faster

No-code SMPs don't require programming skills to build and manage automated workflows. Instead, these platforms use an intuitive drag-and-drop interface that anyone can quickly learn and use. As such, they can significantly reduce the "time to automation."

As a result, it makes sense that the top advantages of no-code SMPs are about **improved productivity** and **automating more in less time**.

In the next section, we'll discuss upcoming trends, new IT priorities for 2023, and what the future of SaaSOps looks like (according to our respondents!).

### No-code SMP advantages for SaaSOps



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**SaaS Ops in 2023  
and Beyond**

# What does the future of SaaSops look like?

## Here's what respondents envision:

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SaaSops in 2023 and Beyond

### More automation & AI

"No-code workflows."

"Zero-touch automations."

"Machine learning, AI initiatives."

### Dedicated SaaSops positions & teams

"Ideally we can have a SaaSops person take care of SaaS operations, spend, automations etc."

"Automation specialists."

"Establish a dedicated team responsible for SaaSops."

"Need to budget OpEx for a dedicated full-time employee."

### Growing & evolving

"An expanding role with increasing viability."

"It's only going to grow."

"Increased visibility and adoption within many businesses as we aim to reduce manual overhead and drive value."

"SaaSops has great potential."

"More productivity."

### More integrations

"Vendors providing more native/built-in integrations with the ability to customize/script them further."

"MFA integration."

"Will need more integrations as we use more SaaS apps."

"Modern device management."

### Here to stay

"Bright as heck - automation, security minded, and business strategy focused."

"It is definitely here to stick since it makes it easy for the IT team to manage [apps] and improves employee experience."

### A core IT function

"Bake in SaaSops as a part of regular SysOps functions."

"Part of the IT ops job."

### Critical

"SaaSops will become more and more critical for our org."

"It's becoming more and more common and necessary within our company and in general."

**37%** of respondents said SaaSops was critical, increasingly common, or growing.

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SaaSops in 2023 and Beyond

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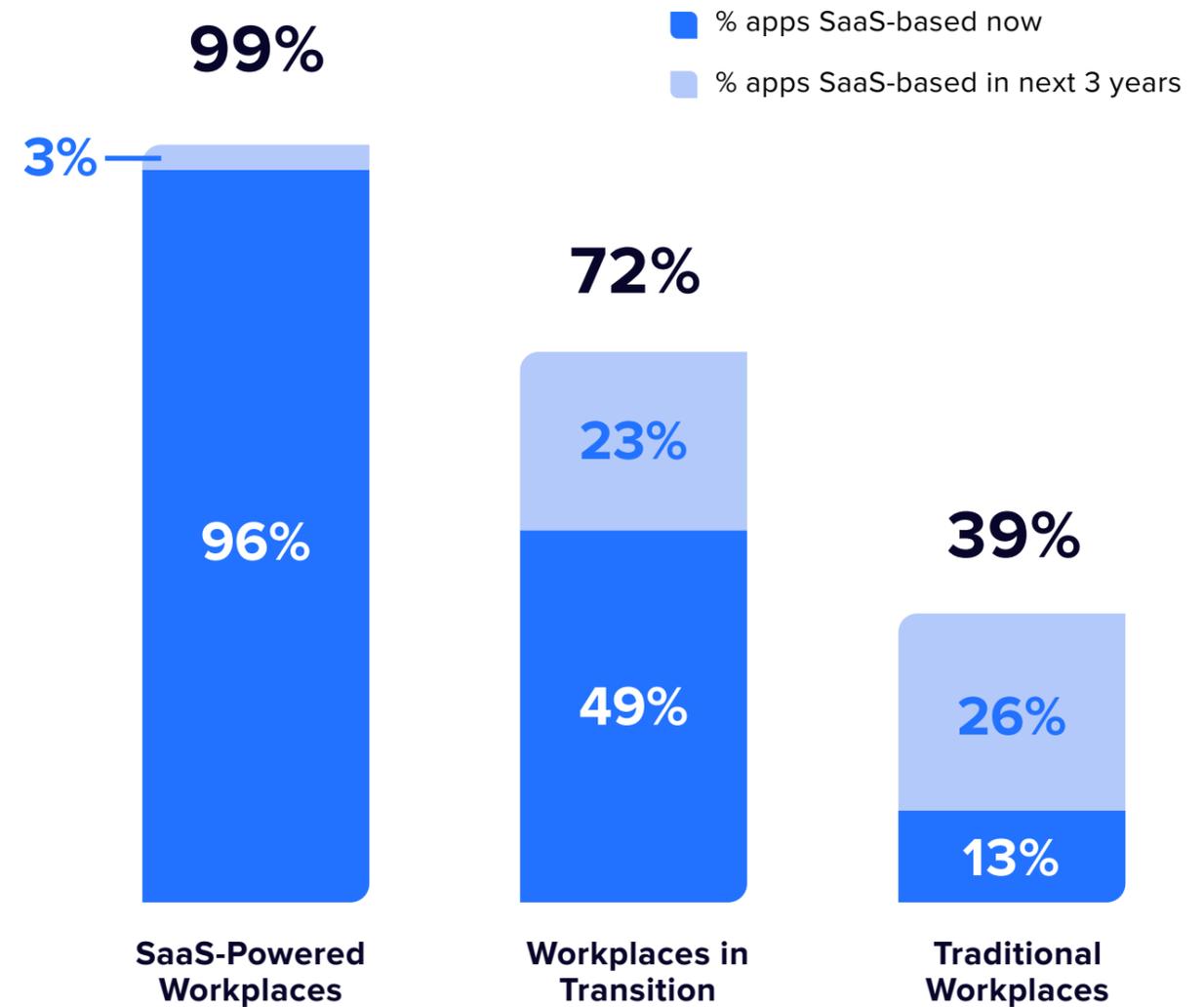
# SaaS will soon be the dominant way software is used by nearly all organizations

Legacy software that is installed and managed on-prem, where enterprises pay hefty license fees and manage clunky hardware, is quickly becoming a relic of the past.

SaaS applications are the primary tools that enterprises leverage to operate their businesses—and even the most established organizations are making the switch to cloud-based software.

SaaS-Powered Workplaces will become even more reliant on cloud-based software in the coming years, and Workplaces in Transition expect to rapidly catch up. While Traditional Workplaces are making the digital transformation more slowly, workplaces of all types are relying on SaaS to transform how people work.

Percent of enterprise IT apps in 2026

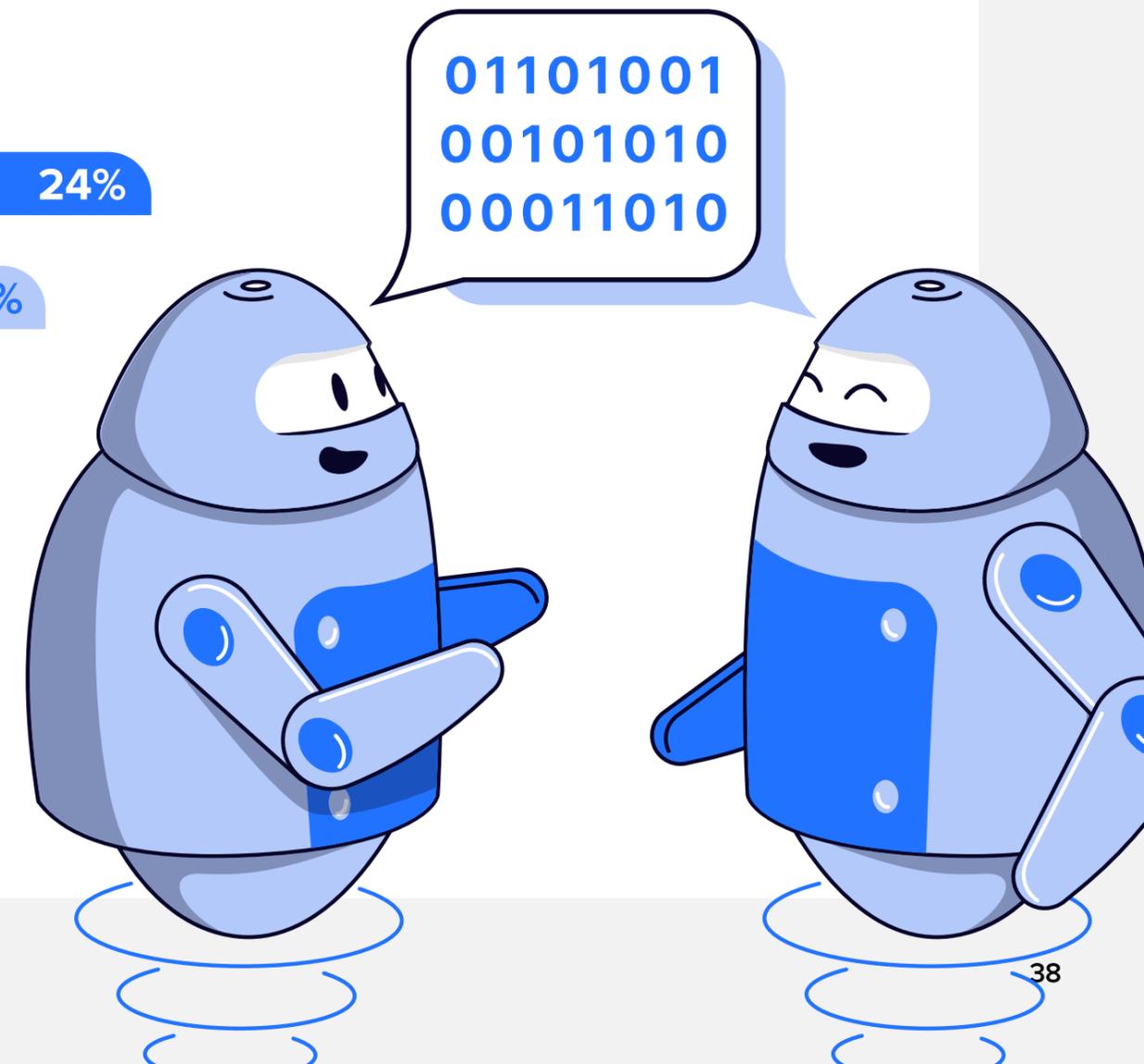


# IT priorities in 2023: more business collaboration and automation

In addition to increasing their reliance on SaaS applications in 2023, IT teams will be busy improving collaboration with other business departments. Nearly a quarter (**24%**) of respondents cited this as their biggest priority for the upcoming year. Strengthening collaboration provides a tremendous opportunity for IT—a chance to uplevel their impact, boost visibility, and drive innovation across the organization.

Other big priorities for 2023 include (not surprisingly) automating more SaaS Ops tasks, improving SaaS data protection, and continuing the digital transformation journey.

Biggest IT priority for next 12-18 months



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SaaSops in 2023 and Beyond

## IT has a new charter: transform the employee experience

As the war to attract and retain extraordinary talent tightens in an unpredictable labor market, it's imperative to create and maintain an exceptional employee experience. That employee experience begins the minute each candidate schedules their first interview—and it doesn't end until they depart for their next company.

Not only are IT teams aware that it's important, they also realize they have a big hand in it. Employee experience is no longer solely in HR's wheelhouse. IT can offer the best technology; they can ensure employees have the right access and data to do their jobs. In doing so, they unlock new productivity and exceptional employee experience.

An overwhelming **83%** of respondents agree that employee experience will become more important to their business in the next 12 months. Similarly, **80%** say IT will be increasingly responsible for employee experience in the next 12 months.

“The future of SaaSops is self-service for end users. When they arrive at the business, they should have the right tools for the job until the day they leave. We should only need to configure behaviors and be alerted when it doesn't work.”

Head of integrations at software company with 3,000 employees

This is why automating employee onboarding will be increasingly crucial for all organizations. A new employee who's equipped with their computer and all their SaaS tools on day 1, minute 1 will feel welcome *and* more empowered to get off to a productive start.

But to consistently provide the best employee experience, IT needs not only automation, but zero-touch automation.

# 83%

Employee experience will become more important to their business in the next 12 months

# 80%

IT will be increasingly responsible for employee experience in the next 12 months

*% agree/strongly agree*

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SaaSOps in 2023 and Beyond

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## IT is working toward zero-touch automation. But what are the barriers to achieving it?

Zero-touch IT moves beyond simple task automation. It's the orchestration of end-to-end, automated workflows that replace repetitive, manual IT processes. The goal of zero-touch IT is to reduce the number of manual "touchpoints" by IT support to as close to zero as possible.

Some examples are:

Zero-touch **hardware provisioning**

Zero-touch **onboarding**

Zero-touch **offboarding**

Zero-touch **mid-lifecycle changes**

Zero-touch **app access requests**

But to realize the dream of zero-touch automation, there are real barriers to overcome.

About 20% say there are too many legacy apps in their environment that make automation difficult. Additionally, organizations feel hampered by a lack of knowledge, skills, training, or time to learn on the job, as well as lack of budget.

Regardless, IT is working to overcome these barriers and make zero touch a reality.

### Barriers to zero-touch automation

Too many legacy apps make it hard to automate

19%

Lack of knowledge, skills, training or time to learn

17%

Lack of budget

16%

Not enough time to build automated workflows

15%

Unsure which automation tool is the best value for our use cases

11%

Not enough guidance from other business functions to build workflows

11%

SaaS license tier or API limitation

10%

Other

1%



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SaaSops in 2023 and Beyond

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# The bright future of SaaSops is driven by zero-touch automation

Zero-touch automation is a journey, and nearly **70%** of respondents say they're working toward it.

But the best part?

IT believes that zero touch is the future. Nearly **80%** of SaaS-Powered Workplaces, about **75%** of Workplaces in Transition, and even **57%** of Traditional Workplaces agree.

As we wrap up 2023's State of SaaSops report, we do so with exceptional enthusiasm for the future. Driven by zero-touch automation, SaaSops is now the standard way IT discovers, manages, and secures SaaS at organizations everywhere.



**69%**  
say their IT team is working toward zero-touch automation

**72%**  
believe zero-touch automation is the future of SaaSops



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## **Appendix: Methodology and Demographics**

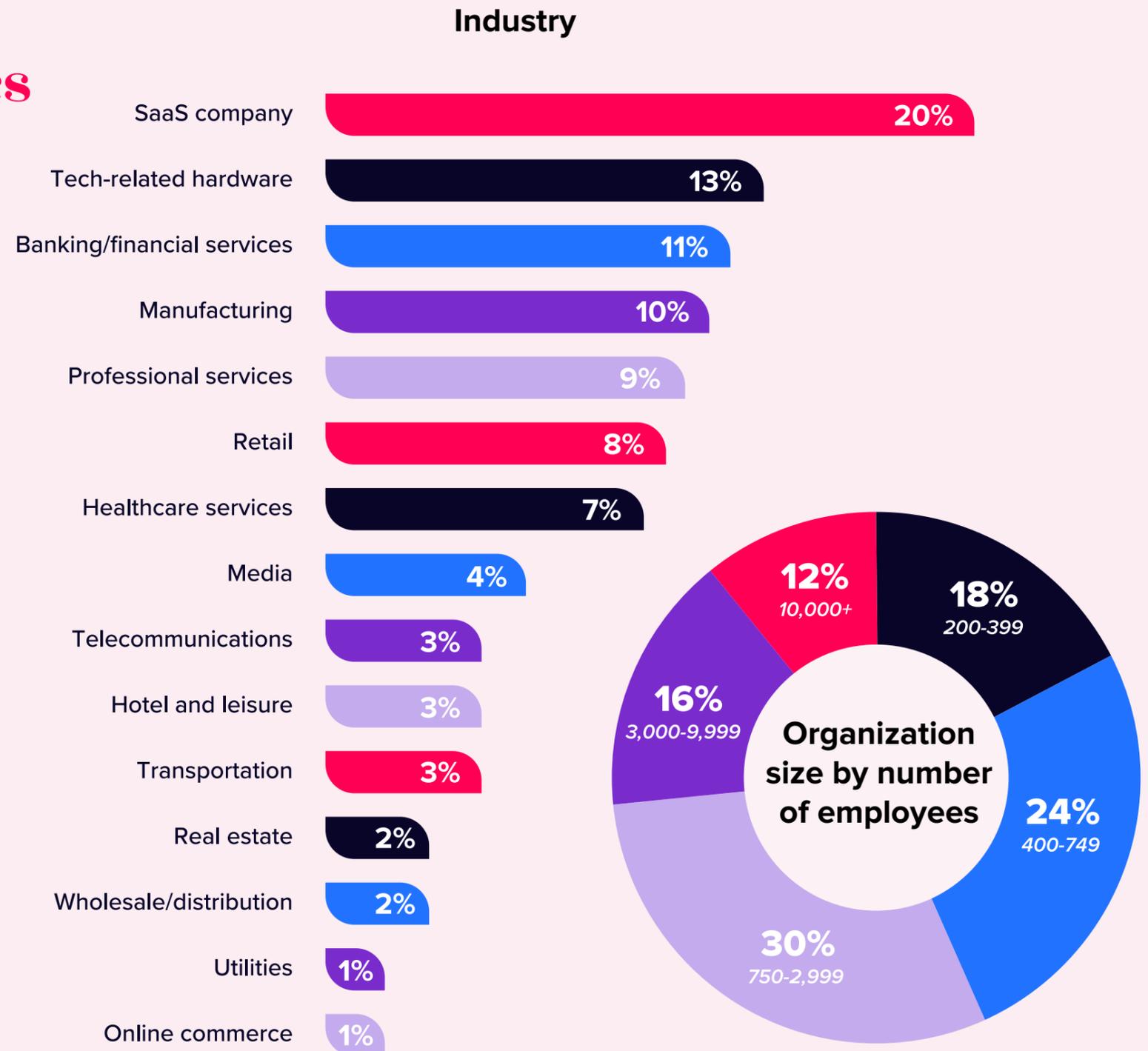
## APPENDIX: Methodology and Demographics

This survey was conducted online from July 19, 2022 to August 25, 2022.

We collected data from IT and security professionals who were personally involved in one or more of the following activities related to SaaS apps:

- Approving or making final buying decisions,
- Researching and recommending apps,
- Determining requirements for new apps,
- Supporting end users,
- Managing, deploying, or securing apps,
- Or handling vendor relationships and/or procurement.

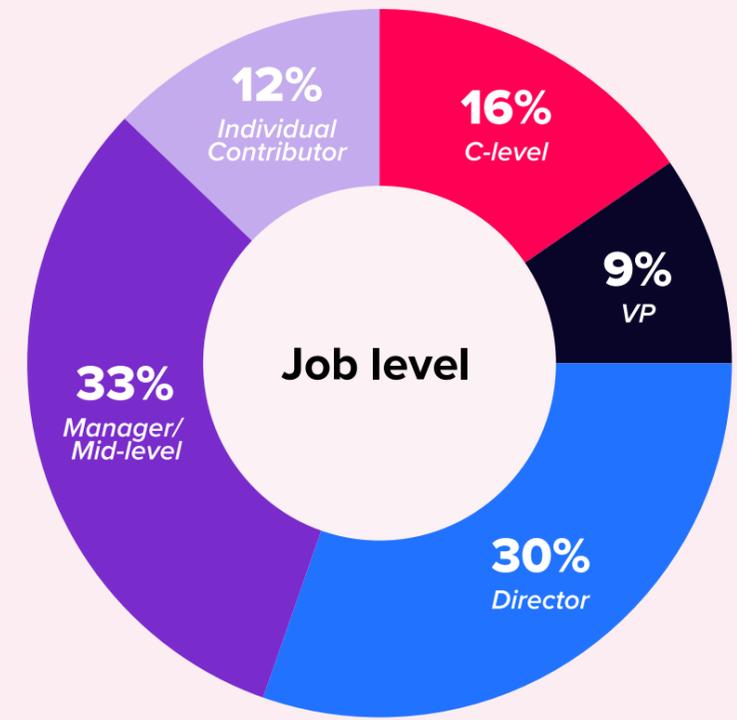
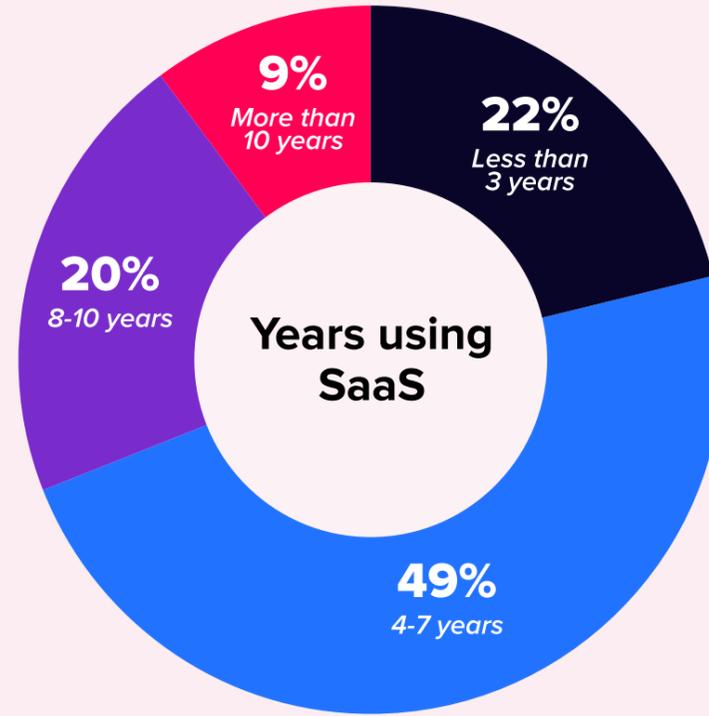
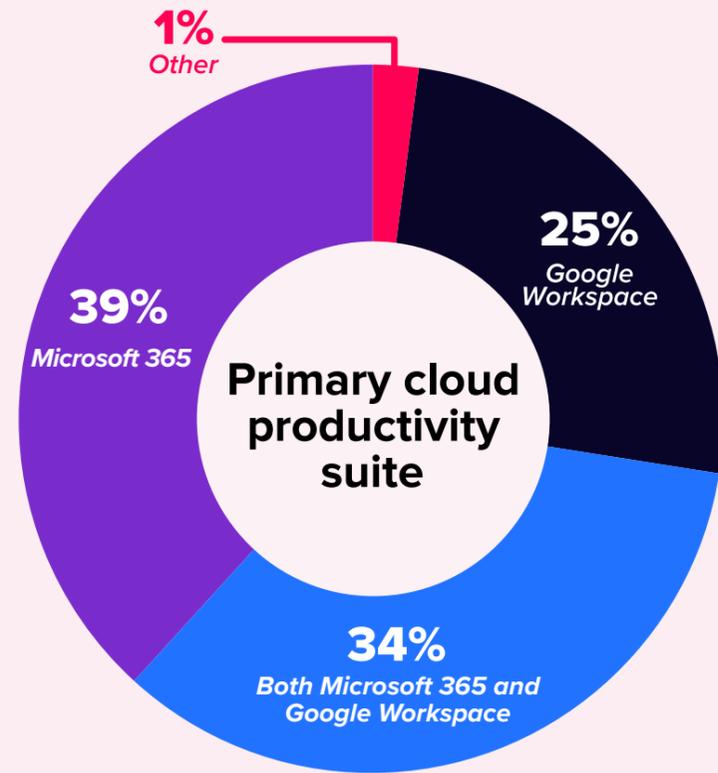
Our 743 respondents consisted of members of our IT community, BetterCloud customers and non-customers, and market research panel members.



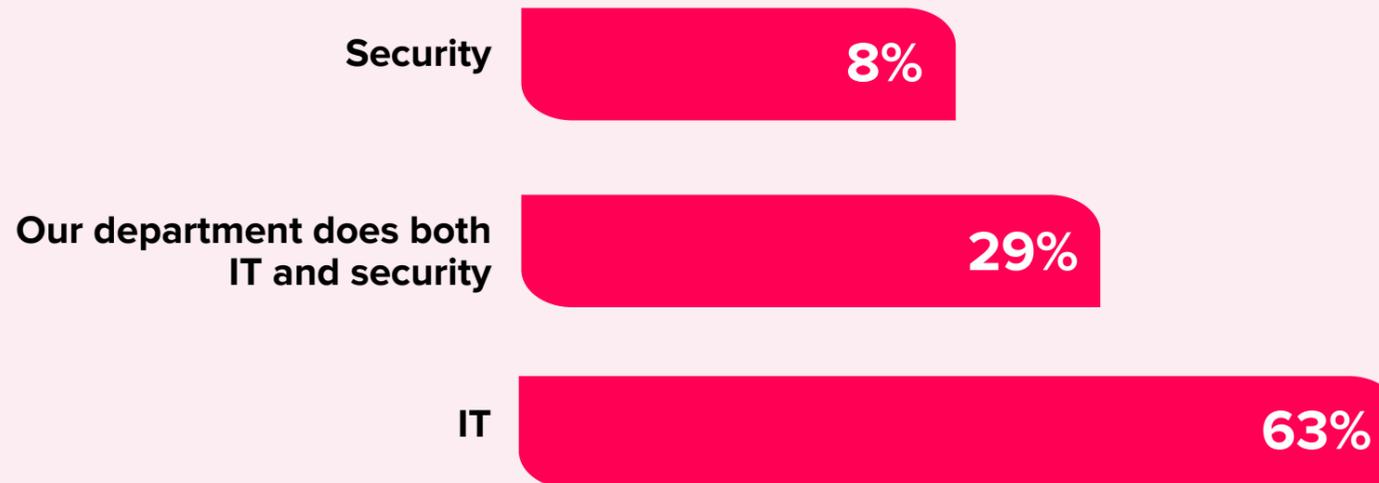
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Appendix: Methodology and Demographics

## APPENDIX: Demographics



### Department



# About BetterCloud

BetterCloud is the market leader for SaaS Operations, enabling IT professionals to transform their employee experience, maximize operational efficiency, and centralize data protection. With no-code automation enabling zero-touch workflows, thousands of forward-thinking organizations rely on BetterCloud to automate processes and policies across their cloud application portfolio.

With 10+ years experience pioneering the SaaS Operations movement, BetterCloud now serves the world's largest community of SaaS Ops experts. As host of Altitude, the industry's leading SaaS Ops event, and publisher of The State of SaaS Ops Report, the category's definitive market research, BetterCloud is recognized by customers (G2) and leading analyst firms (Gartner and Forrester) as the market leader in SaaS Operations Management.

Headquartered in New York City, with a product and engineering office in Atlanta, GA, as well as innovation hubs & remote talent across the U.S., BetterCloud is backed, among others, by some of the best technology investors including Vista Equity Partners, Warburg Pincus, Bain Capital, and Accel.

To learn more about how BetterCloud can help you discover, manage, and secure your SaaS environment, [\*\*request a demo.\*\*](#)

