Digital transformation is forcing many organizations to re-think and upgrade their wide area network (WAN). Organizations recognize the need—and most have plans to update their WAN—but the challenges are real and varied, according to a new survey by IDG and CenturyLink.

Here are the key pain points that organizations are facing when modernizing their WAN. There are roadblocks from a network and user perspective. For example, to meet new business demands, increased network bandwidth and performance is required. Digital transformation is changing the way users are accessing business tools, consumer-oriented tools, and personal mobile applications.

**Plan to Update the WAN**

- 50% plan to update the WAN to support digital transformation
- 57% have already taken steps towards modernization

A variety of objectives are driving WAN updates:

- **Improving network performance**: 49%
- **Improving network security**: 49%
- **Boosting network agility and responsiveness**: 48%
- **Reducing network costs**: 46%
- **Supporting increase in IoT device endpoints**: 40%
- **Supporting bandwidth-intensive applications such as data analytics/BI/AI**: 38%

**Challenges with Modernizing the WAN**

- 57% of organizations have experienced negative consequences as a result of WAN management challenges, including:
  - 95% increased cost/performance
  - 88% decreased business impact
  - 96% adverse user/customer satisfaction

**Reduce Risk and Accelerate Results with a Managed Service Provider**

- 47% of organizations have worked or are working with a Managed Service Provider (MSP).

These are the benefits they see today:

- **Reduced network costs**: 37%
- **Increased network speed**: 37%
- **Better bandwidth optimization**: 35%
- **Support for cloud application access**: 31%
- **Better network agility and responsiveness**: 29%
- **Improved security**: 29%
- **Improved application performance**: 26%
- **Skills gap**: 38%
- **Managing bandwidth needs**: 36%
- **Getting optimal performance**: 25%

Not all MSPs are created equal. The most popular attributes among IDG survey respondents include:

- Experience with network security and solutions
- Ability to customize solutions in your unique environment
- Price/TCO
- Cloud service interconnectivity
- Experience with inter-cloud and/or multi-cloud environments
- Ability to customize your architecture in a single service contract
- Fractional IT
- Cloud native infrastructure

**About the Survey**

The above information is derived from the IDG survey and is based on 100 qualified respondents.

**Learn more about CenturyLink® SD-WAN**

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