ManageEngine

Role of IT: 2022 & Beyond

Singapore

Index

Introduction

The IT department's role is far-reaching, varied, and pivotal to their organisation's success—either centrally or in support of other departments within the organisation. Artificial intelligence and machine learning are already used extensively across the business, but more training may be required for it to be used to its full potential outside of the IT department. IT's role, therefore, is set to be even greater in the next five years. But with such a pivotal role, organisations must be careful not to push their IT talent away.

This report examines the status, future, and risks of IT and technology use in large and enterprise-sized organisations across Singapore.
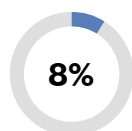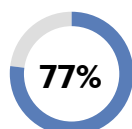
Key findings

99%   99%of IT decision makers report challenges with decentralising IT.
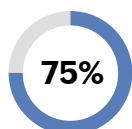
75%   75% of IT decision makers agree that their organisation should have supported them more in the last two years.

8%   Only 8% of decision makers believe that everyone in the organisation should be responsible for protecting their organisation from cyberattacks.

77%   77% of business decision makers report that their organisation's IT department has complete or near-complete control of data access for their department

Decentralisation of IT

According to the majority (81%) of IT decision makers (ITDMs), their organisations have already successfully decentralised their IT structures, with most of the remaining ITDMs' (16%) organisations currently attempting to do so.
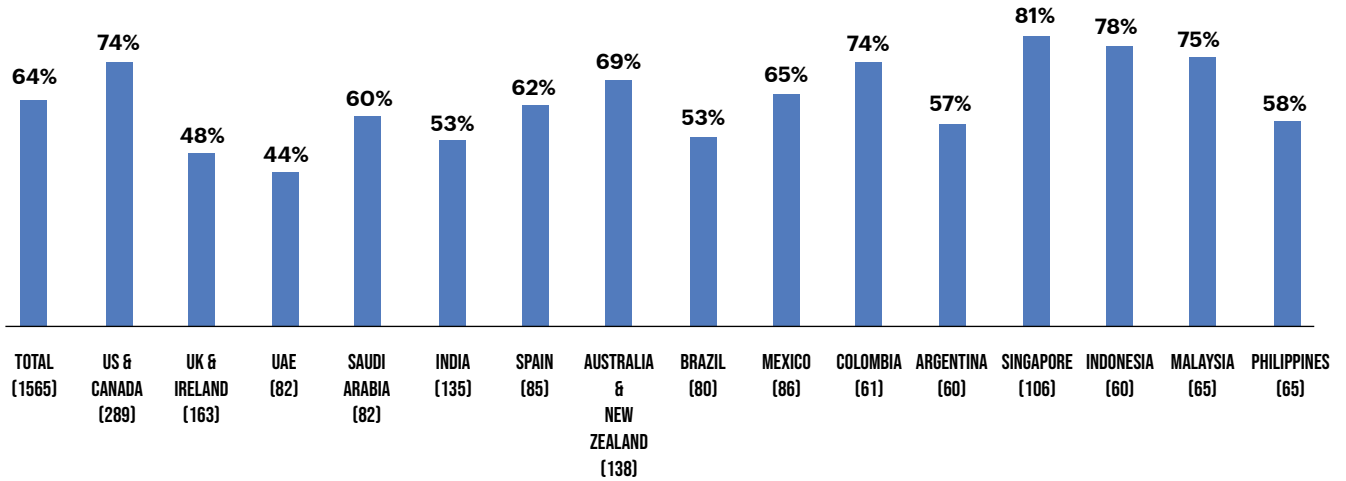

Figure 1: Is your organisation attempting to decentralise its IT structure?

This has not been without its challenges, however, with almost all (99%) reporting there are challenges with decentralising their organisations' IT functions, the two most likely being maintaining IT security (54%) and maintaining quality levels (48%).

Despite the challenges faced, the perceived benefits are widely recognised amongst ITDMs and business decision makers (BDMs), as almost all (95%) believe there are benefits to decentralising their IT function. The majority of decision makers believe that if their organisation decentralises its IT functions, the importance of IT's role in the business will become more recognised or acknowledged (60%), and that there will be increased scope of innovation (56%) as a result.

Evolving role of IT

The role that IT plays is varied. More than four in ten (43%) of ITDMs, report that they were inadequately consulted when their organisations adopted or adapted their flexible working models. This is the highest figure of all countries included in the research (although several countries were more likely to have not been consulted at all on this).
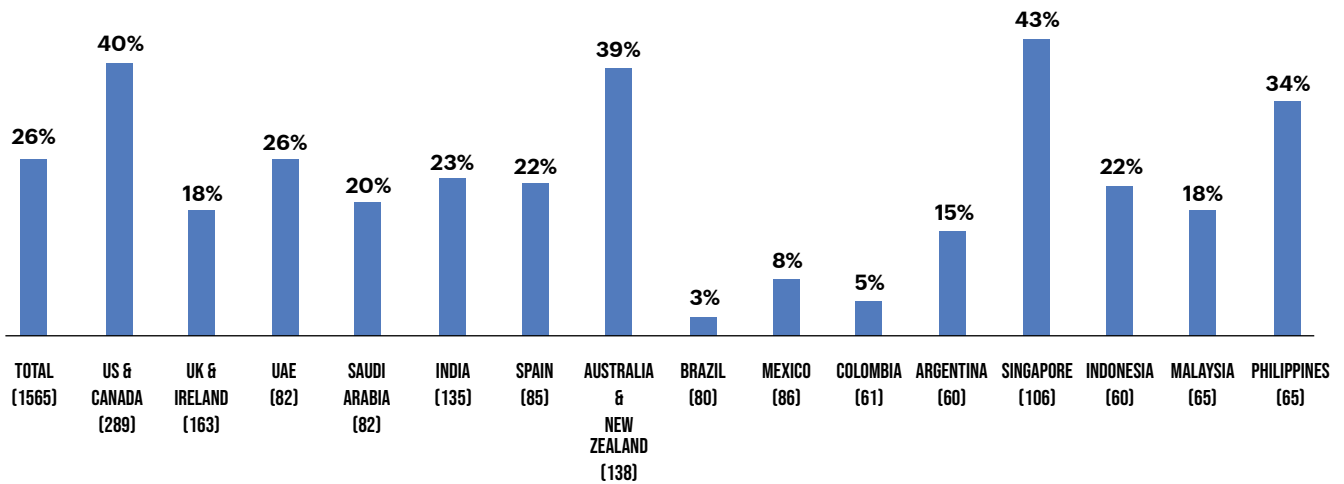

Figure 2: To what extent are you being consulted as your organisation adopts and adapts a flexible working model?

However, IT plays a large role in more strategic priorities such as implementing sustainability policies.

- Almost all (89%) of ITDMs and BDMs report their IT department plays a critical or significant role in implementing sustainability policies in their organisations.

- Just over four in ten (41%) ITDMs report their IT department plays a critical role in implementing sustainability policies and are more likely to say this compared to BDMs (29%).

- However, overall, the opinion that IT plays a critical or significant role is similarly shared by both types of decision makers.

The research also reveals that IT holds most of the keys when it comes to controlling access of other departments' data, with the vast majority (77%) of BDMs reporting IT has complete or near-complete control of access to their departments' data. This is the lowest compared to other ASEAN regions surveyed—Malaysia (88%), Indonesia (87%) and Philippines (86%).

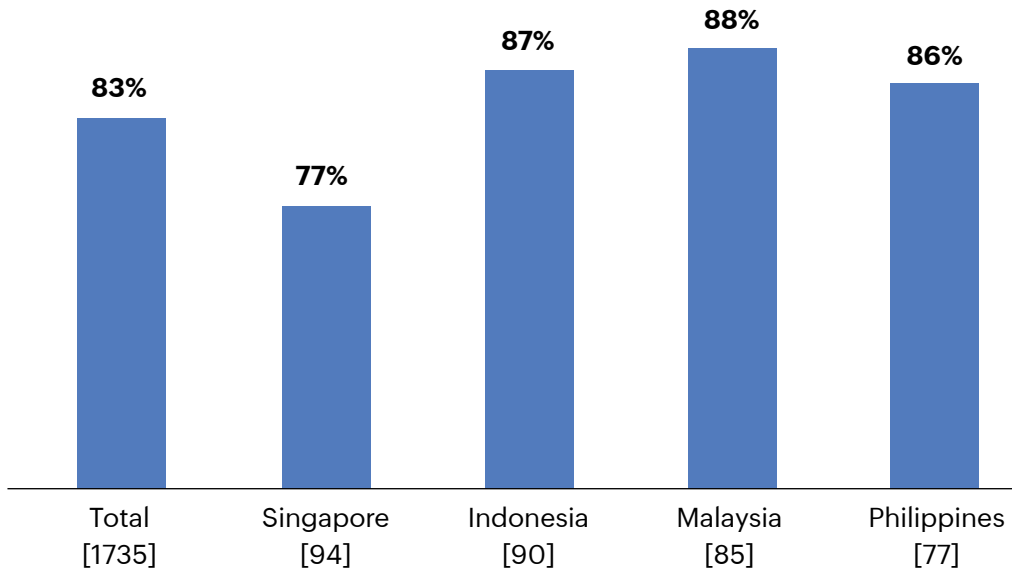*Figure 3: To what extent does your organisation's IT department control data access for your department?*

When it comes to what ITDMs want from their role in the next five years, increased stakeholder management (48%) was deemed most important. This makes Singapore the most likely country of those included in the research to report this.

Figure 4: What do you want most from your role in the next 5 years?

Along with offering opportunities to their IT talent, organisations must be careful to not take away existing benefits from their employees. Nearly half of ITDMs say that they would be driven away from their organisation if the following were taken away:

- Pay increase in line with inflation (50%).
- Acknowledgement from/working with senior management (48%).
- Potential for promotion (47%).

There is clearly a delicate balance for organisations to strike if they are to hold on to the knowledge and skills that have been built up in their IT department's leadership. But the truth is that ITDMs are looking beyond their current employer when it comes to their future. Three quarters (75%) of ITDMs agree that "My organisation should have supported me more in the last two years." Similarly, 59% of ITDMs agree that "I feel less loyalty to my employer than I did two years ago," and 35% of ITDMs strongly agree with this statement, making ITDMs in Singapore the most likely to do so compared to ITDMs in other countries. Perhaps most concerning of all, 53% agree that "I am actively looking for a new job".

Despite IT's involvement in decision-making and the expectation for their department to prevent cyberattacks, only around three in ten BDMs (31%) consider IT to have complete authority in preventing decisions based on security and technical concerns. Albeit a further 54% report that IT has considerable authority.
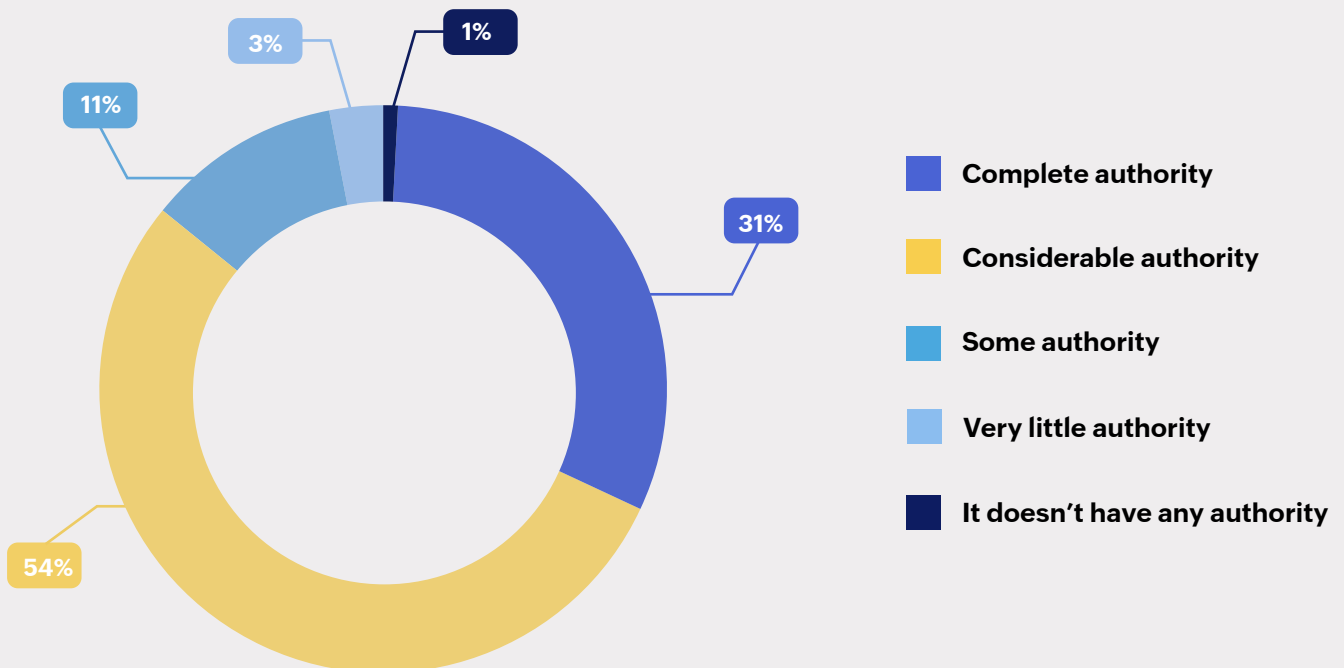

Figure 5: How much authority does your organisation's IT team have in preventing business decisions based on security and technical concerns?

SECTION 3

Cybersecurity concerns

Protecting the organisation against cyberattacks also feature as part of IT's role. Fewer than a quarter (22%) of decision makers report that third-party security specialists are responsible for protecting the organisation from cyberattacks, suggesting that internal IT departments are most likely to be looked to in order to protect the business from cyberattacks.

Indeed, IT and security teams are equally likely (alongside the Chief Security Officer) to be reported as being responsible for protection (both by 48%). But what is most surprising is that fewer than one in ten decision makers (8%) expect everyone in the organisation to play a role in protecting their organisation against cyberattacks.

Nearly all (94%) of BDMs report that their organisation has invested in AI/ML, and the most likely area of investment is to prevent cyberattacks (59%). Furthermore, 82% of respondents agree that "AI and ML technologies will play a significant role in strengthening our IT security framework in the near future."

SECTION 4

Technology adoption challenges

There are challenges for organisations when it comes to getting the most out of technologies. Nearly all (98%) BDMs say that their organisation's employees face barriers when it comes to taking full advantage of technologies.

- Nearly half (48%) cite a lack of training.
- The same proportion (48%) say that employees are usually not included in decisions concerning technology.
- Slightly fewer (43%) also report that the evolving nature of technology is a challenge.

But IT is set to have a greater role in organisations over the next five years, and so organisations need to work hard to overcome these barriers. Around two thirds of ITDMs believe that IT will increasingly adopt new technology (69%), so these challenges may only grow unless they are addressed.

Conclusion

The IT department's role is varied, but is experiencing extensive changes and challenges. The decentralising of IT has already happened, but there are notable challenges in doing so. Departments outside of IT are already likely to hold autonomy to some degree when it comes to tech choices. This has influenced decisions around recruitment and skills training in these departments. But skills training is a definite weakness in a large proportion of organisations. Yet it is at this critical time for IT that ITDMs may at least be considering leaving to find a new role in another organisation.

If IT decentralisation is to continue successfully, innovation is to flourish, and functions across the organisation are to take full advantage of technologies available, organisations will need to work hard to retain their tech talent.

Metodología

ManageEngine commissioned independent market research agency Vanson Bourne to conduct the research upon which this executive summary is based. Two hundred decision makers across IT and other key business functions were surveyed from a range of private sector organisations across Singapore. The wider global research included 3,300 decision makers across IT and other key business functions from a range of private sector organisations across the globe.

All interviews were conducted using a rigorous multi-level screening process to ensure that only suitable candidates were given the opportunity to participate.

About ManageEngine

ManageEngine is the enterprise IT management division of Zoho Corporation. Established and emerging enterprises—including 9 of every 10 Fortune 100 organizations—rely on ManageEngine's real-time IT management tools to ensure optimal performance of their IT infrastructure, including networks, servers, applications, desktops and more. ManageEngine has offices worldwide, including the United States, the United Arab Emirates, the Netherlands, India, Colombia, Mexico, Brazil, Singapore, Japan, China and Australia, as well as 200+ global partners to help organizations tightly align their business and IT.

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