

# End User Experience Management Is Essential To Deliver On Hybrid Cloud Expectations

End User Experience Analytics  
Greatly Affects Data-Driven Business  
Decisions

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## Executive Summary

Cloud technologies are key enablers of next-generation business performance. IT teams across organizations need to focus on improving end user monitoring and analytics. These improvements, if made, can enable cloud success by improving the productivity of end users in their organization as well as contribute valuable insights from end user experience-derived analytics that can help businesses develop into digital businesses.

In November 2015, Nextthink commissioned Forrester Consulting to evaluate the state of business end user monitoring in organizations. To further explore this trend, Forrester developed a hypothesis asserting that in hybrid cloud environments, front-end monitoring is neglected — disadvantaging end users' experience and productivity in the process — and robbing IT of the opportunity to deliver business value that meets business end users' expectations. When IT focuses attention on end user experience analytics, IT is more likely to overcome challenges unique to a hybrid cloud environment while simultaneously gaining beneficial insights that allow firms to make more data-driven business decisions.

In conducting four in-depth phone interviews and 190 online surveys with IT decision-makers in the US, the UK, France, and Germany, Forrester found that IT has a major focus on cloud monitoring and management challenges. We also found that increased investment in analytics through end user monitoring yields insights that have a high level of impact on key objectives that can transform firms into digital businesses.

### KEY FINDINGS

Forrester's study yielded three key findings:

- › **Organizations adopt hybrid cloud deployments to take advantage of speed and diversity of services.** Sixty-two percent of firms have adopted either public or private cloud deployment models. They have adopted them to speed up systems of engagement (46%) and take advantage of different services on different cloud platforms (42%) in addition to more traditionally back-office uses such as storage services (50%).
- › **Cloud monitoring and infrastructure management sit high on IT's list of challenges.** IT tracks usage (38%) and costs (36%) across multiple clouds, as well as manages network performance (33%).

- › **End user monitoring and analytics insights help organizations achieve digital business objectives.** Eighty-seven percent of IT decision-makers in this study reported that the insights gained from end user experience analytics have a high or extremely high impact on making more data-driven business decisions, and 81% said the insights have a high or extremely high impact on creating a comprehensive strategy for addressing digital technologies.

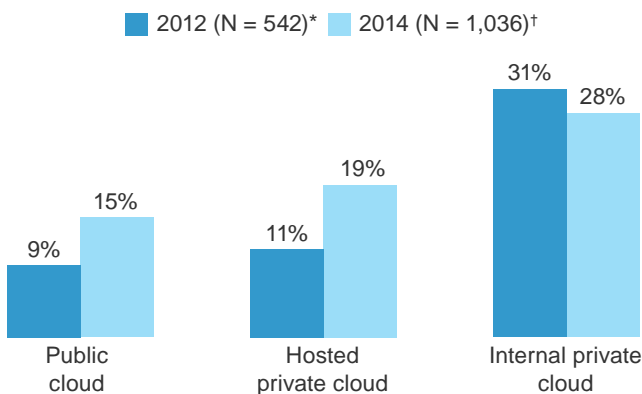
## Firms Move To Hybrid Cloud To Achieve Key Business Objectives

The accelerating speed of business means that firms must adapt to market changes in order to survive, and adapting to these changes requires that firms match the speed and fluidity of the cloud.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, cloud adoption has become the norm — 62% of firms have adopted either public or private clouds (see Figure 1). Divergent levels of adoption among public and private cloud offerings indicate that infrastructure and operations (I&O) professionals are evaluating the right cloud services to adopt for their organization — understanding that not everything is right for cloud and pursuing a hybrid mix of services.<sup>2</sup>

The move to hybrid cloud simplifies real-time engagement with employees, partners, and customers — enabling new business models and sources of value while aggregating information to enable smarter processes and unique insights.<sup>3</sup> Responses from this study highlight this, as IT decision-makers stated that their organizations:

**FIGURE 1**  
Overall Cloud Adoption Rises Among US And European Enterprises

**“What are your firm’s plans to adopt the following cloud platform deployment models?”**  
(Showing implemented answers)



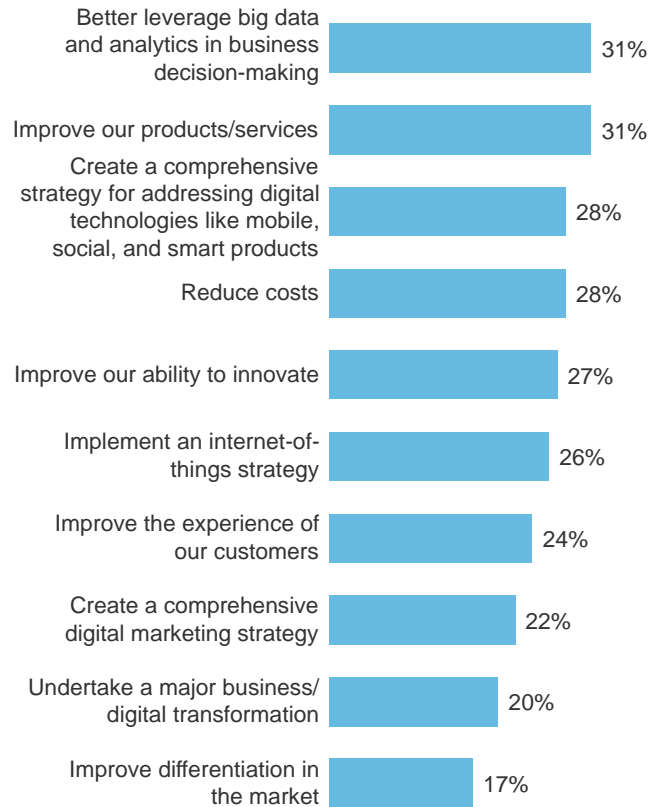
Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

› **Pursue digital business objectives.** Leveraging data and analytics (31%) as well as creating comprehensive strategies to address digital technology (28%) are among the top five overall business priorities for organizations (see Figure 2).

**FIGURE 2**  
Organizations Prioritize Digital Business Objectives

**“Which of the following priorities are most important to how your organization does business?”**

(Selections ranked as 1st, 2nd, or 3rd priorities.  
Top 10 responses shown)



Base: 190 IT manager+ respondents responsible for end user monitoring decisions in the US and EMEA

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Nexthink, November 2015

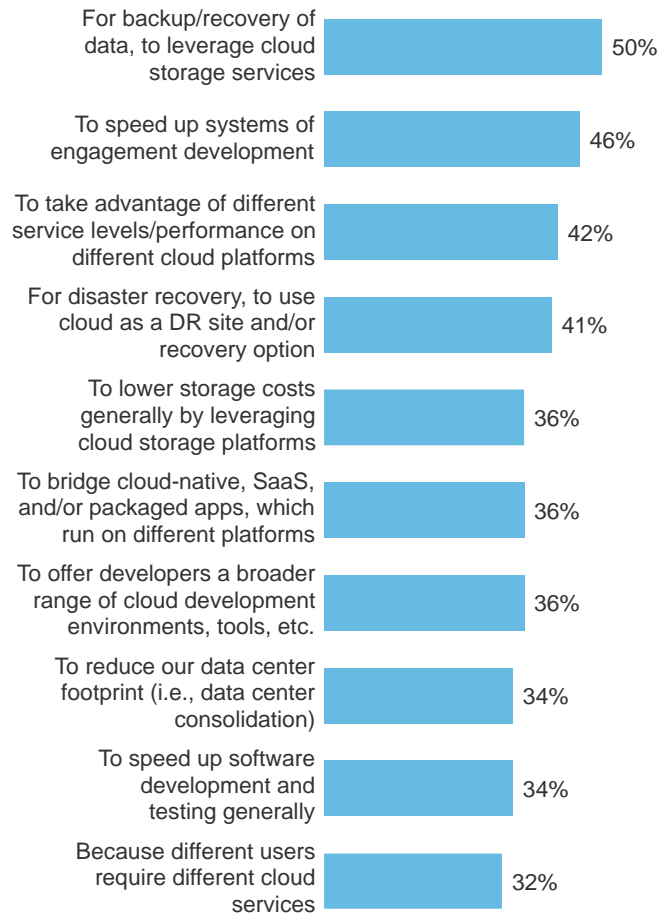
- › **Seek speed and diversity of services from hybrid deployments.** IT decision-makers confirmed that they seek to speed up systems of engagement (46%) and take advantage of different services on different cloud platforms (42%), in addition to more traditionally back-office uses such as storage services (50%) and cloud as a disaster recovery option (41%) (see Figure 3).

**FIGURE 3**

**Firms Seek A Variety Of Outcomes From Hybrid Cloud**

**“You indicated that you are piloting or using more than one type of cloud or have more than one implementation of a particular cloud type. Why do you use multiple cloud types?”**

(Select all that apply. Top 10 responses shown)



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## Challenges Frustrate Firms' Hybrid Cloud Ambitions

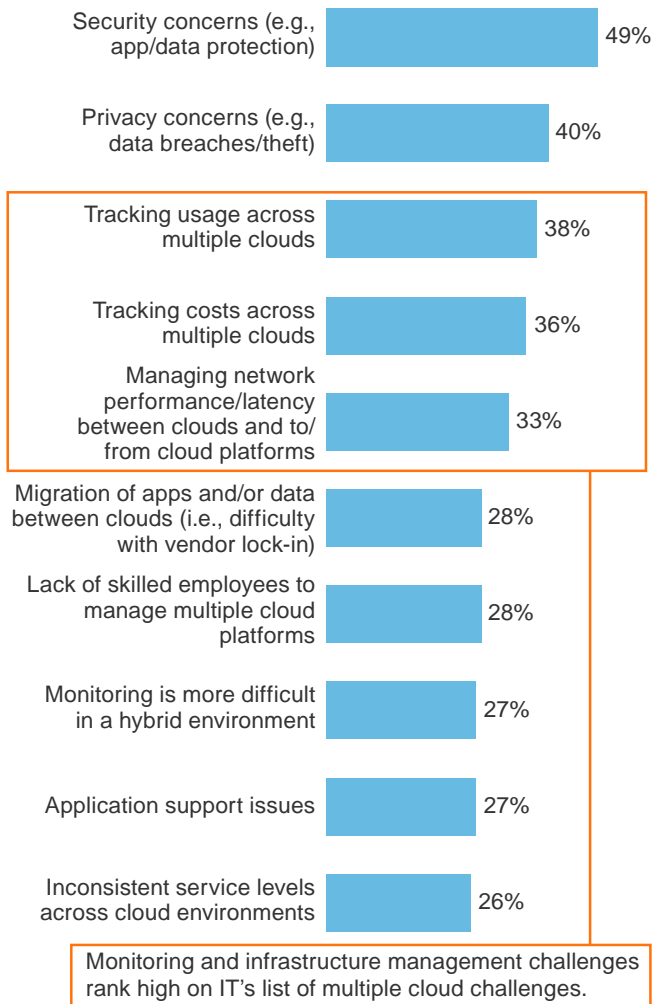
Embracing hybrid cloud, however, is not without challenges. The newness of cloud offerings as well as shortages of skills can complicate the move to hybrid cloud for firms. IT decision-makers in this study reported that (see Figure 4):

**FIGURE 4**

### Usage, Costs, And Network Performance Top Multicloud Challenges

**“What challenges have you faced/do you expect to face deploying/using multiple cloud platforms/environments?”**

(Select all that apply. Top 10 responses shown)



- › **Cloud monitoring and infrastructure management sit high on IT's list of challenges.** Next to security and privacy, about one-third of our sample reported that IT focuses on the challenges relating to tracking usage (38%) and costs (36%) across multiple clouds. They also reported issues around managing network performance (33%).
- › **Managing information transfer nevertheless remains difficult.** An in-depth interview with a senior-level IT decision-maker at a US distribution company sheds further light on this situation, indicating that managing the interface between different clouds in a hybrid environment is extremely challenging, even though it is not their primary focus.

*“The interface between public and private clouds is difficult at this point in time. Getting data in between clouds is also really difficult.”*

— IT director at a large US distribution firm

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Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Nextthink, November 2015

## FIRMS MONITOR USER PERFORMANCE, SEEKING HYBRID CLOUD SUCCESS

To address these challenges, IT shops are monitoring and managing end users in addition to the systems involved, as:

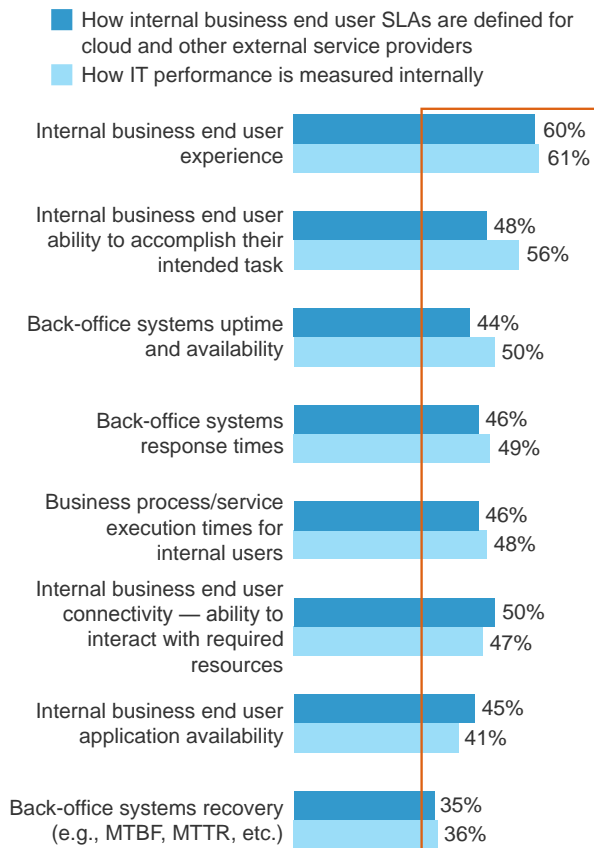
- › **IT applies its internal metrics to external cloud providers.** IT measures performance primarily by the experience of end users (see Figure 5).

**FIGURE 5**

### Internal SLAs Almost Perfectly Match Those Defined For Cloud And Other External Entities

“Which of the following best describes how you measure IT performance internally?”  
 “Which of the following best describes how internal business end user SLAs are defined for cloud and other external service providers to be reported back to the business?”

(Select all that apply. Those who have implemented a public cloud)



IT is responsible for the same SLAs internally

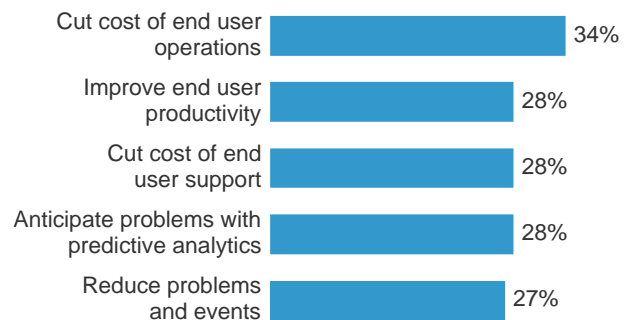
- › **End user experience-derived analytics targets improved cost and productivity.** Roughly one-third of the survey respondents expect end user experience analytics to help meet hybrid cloud objectives in the future (see Figure 6).

**FIGURE 6**

### IT Continues To Face End User Challenges

“Think about the future goals for your organization’s end user monitoring efforts. Which of the following actions/outcomes do you wish to achieve with your end user monitoring that you are not achieving now?”

(Select all that apply. Top five shown)



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Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Nextthink, November 2015

## End User Experience Analytics Enable Hybrid Cloud Success

Investing in end user experience analytics can provide crucial insights that aid in assuaging security concerns —freeing IT and allowing it to refocus on the needs of the end user in an effort to help drive productivity. Those in this study:

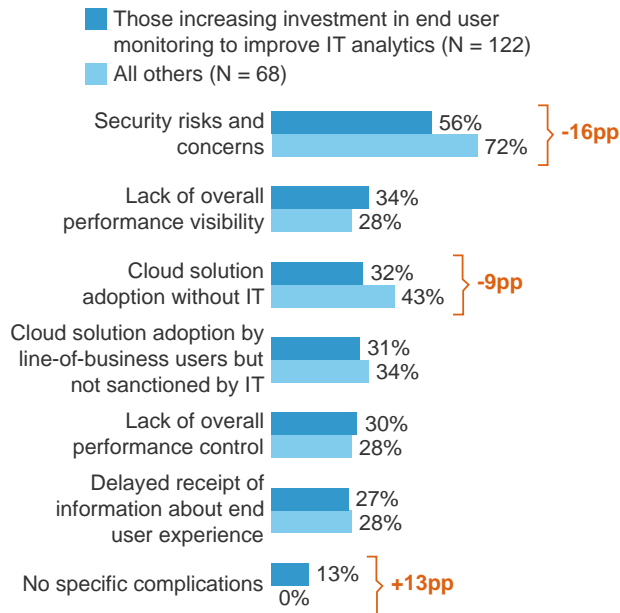
- › **Reduce complications present in a hybrid cloud environment.** This study compared results from organizations that increased their investments in end user monitoring within the past 12 months specifically to improve IT analytics with those that did not (see Figure 7). Respondents that increased monitoring:

**FIGURE 7**

### Firms Track Internal And External End User Complications In The Same Mix

**“You mentioned that you employ multiple cloud types. Which of the following complications do you see in end user monitoring that are unique to a hybrid environment?”**

(Select all that apply)



Base: IT manager+ respondents responsible for end user monitoring decisions in the US and EMEA

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Nextthink, November 2015

- Are less likely to cite security concerns as a complication by 16 percentage points.
- Are less likely to encounter problems with cloud solutions adopted without IT involvement by 9 percentage points.
- Are less likely to experience any complications with their hybrid environments by 13 percentage points. Notably, *everyone* who did not increase investment experienced one or more complication.

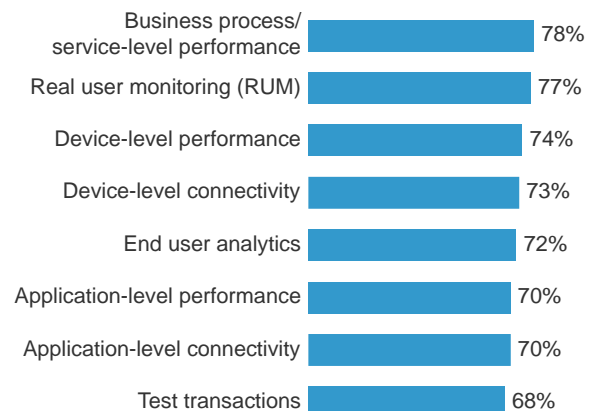
- › **Choose a variety of solutions to monitor end users in a hybrid environment.** Two-thirds or more of those in this study feel that specific solutions ranging from test transactions (68%) and end user analytics (72%) to real user monitoring (77%) are either generally or very effective in overcoming challenges present in end user monitoring in a hybrid environment (see Figure 8).

**FIGURE 8**

### End User Experience Monitoring Solutions Are Effective In Overcoming Challenges With Hybrid Environments

**“How effective would the following solutions be at overcoming the challenges present in end user monitoring in a hybrid environment?”**

(Showing those selecting “very effective” or “generally effective” on a 5-point scale)



Base: 190 IT manager+ respondents responsible for end user monitoring decisions in the US and EMEA

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Nextthink, November 2015



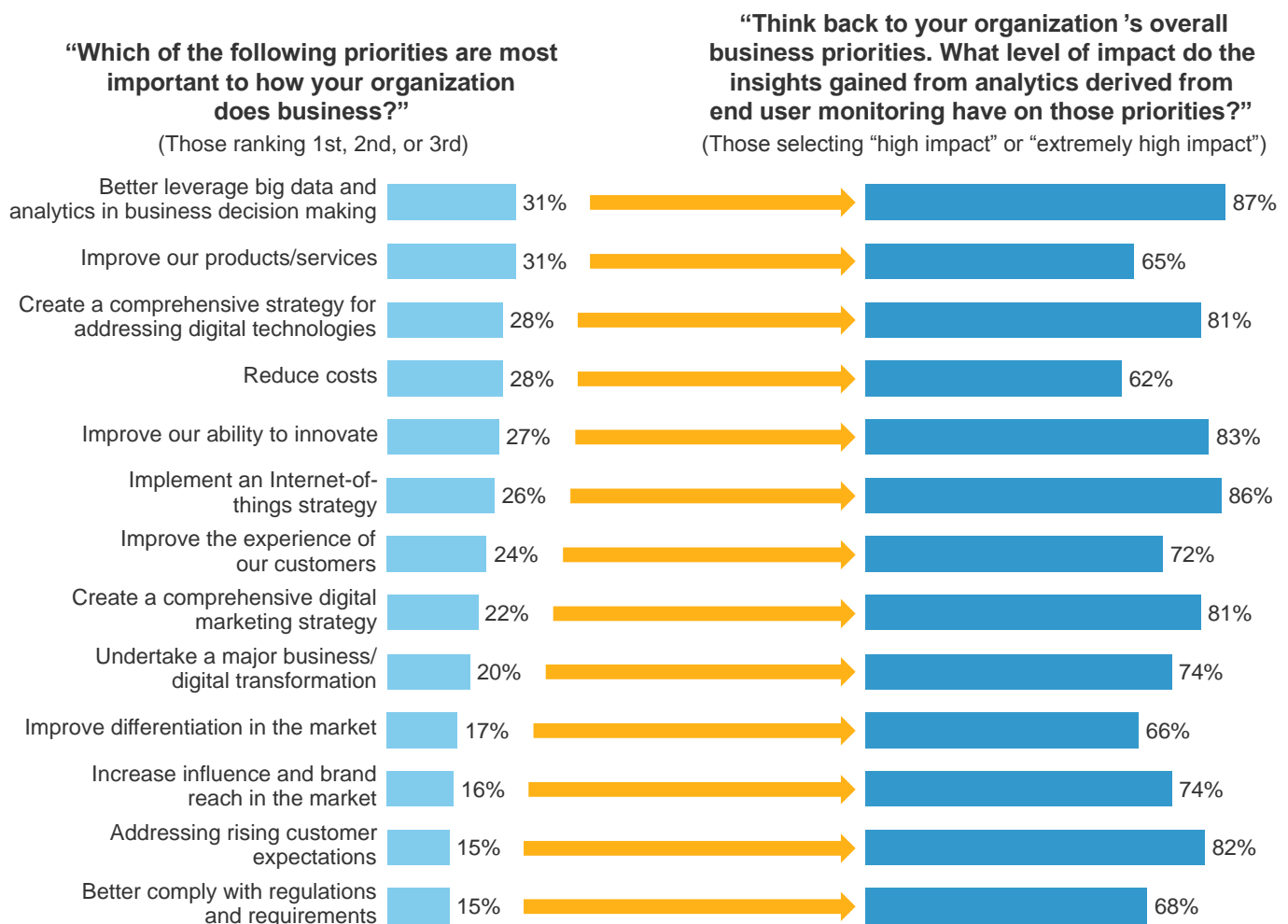
› **Help the business achieve its overall goals.** Insights gained from analytics ultimately equip decision-makers to execute informed, data-driven decisions. This leads 62% to 87% of respondents in this study to state that the insights from end user experience analytics had a high or extremely high impact on each of their overall business priorities. Priorities range from creating a comprehensive digital technology strategy to addressing rising customer expectations (see Figure 9). We spoke to a CTO within a large US insurance company that actively derives insights from end user experience analytics; this leader summarizes it best by stating that the company could “make fact-based decisions, meaning we are able to save money.”

*“Understanding what application and performance issues are and being able to perform adequate levels of analysis means we can make fact-based decisions — meaning we are able to save money.”*

— CTO at a large US insurance firm

**FIGURE 9**

**Insights Gained Have A High Impact On Key Business Priorities**



Base: 190 IT manager+ respondents responsible for end user monitoring decisions in the US and EMEA

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Nextthink, November 2015

## Key Recommendations

Results from this study yielded several important observations, suggesting that IT decision-makers should:

- › **Create a comprehensive end user strategy — starting with identifying business priorities and linking these back, through investments, to end user experience management activities, as they have an impact on these priorities.** Understand that not all services provided by IT will equally align with your organization's overall business strategy. As a result, establishing a comprehensive set of business priorities is the first step toward end user experience management. This will often require input from multiple departments, so be sure to work with your business colleagues to map priorities to the end user activities affecting those priorities.
- › **Link end user experience management and insights to the wide range of business capabilities in which they are engaged — tying overall business objectives to those capabilities.** The manner in which end users interact with technology often only becomes apparent in the field. Being able to effectively monitor this behavior will allow IT to determine if capabilities are being maximized and utilized effectively. This, in turn, will ultimately help executives determine how to apply productivity gains toward fulfilling business objectives.
- › **Measure the impact of these insights, developing plans to continuously improve that impact through test-and-learn approaches.** Tracking not only availability and performance but also ease of use and end user experience will help IT pinpoint root causes of experience issues. These may extend beyond technology and include process or training issues — meaning executives can get a holistic picture of how to address shortfalls and ultimately optimize business services in order to increase productivity.

## Appendix A: Methodology

In this study, Forrester conducted an online survey of 190 IT professionals in organizations of 1,000 or more employees in the US, the UK, France, and Germany. These individuals were managers or higher with decision-making authority over technologies that affect the internal end user in their organizations. Questions provided to the participants asked about their IT investments and end user monitoring efforts, technologies, challenges, and benefits. Forrester also conducted four in-depth phone interviews with the same audience. The study began in October 2015 and was completed in November 2015.

## Appendix B: Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Source: “Cloud Evolves From Point Solution To Strategic Enabler Of The New Connected Economy,” Forrester Research, Inc., January 2, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Source: “Justify Your Hybrid Cloud Future With A Solid Business Case,” Forrester Research, Inc., February 10, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> Source: “Cloud Evolves From Point Solution To Strategic Enabler Of The New Connected Economy,” Forrester Research, Inc., January 2, 2015.