

Cloud Strong

Where business and technology come together



Accelerating change and migrating to cloud: how CIOs are leading from the front during COVID-19

COVID-19 has tested CIOs to the limit. But as Fujitsu's survey shows, many have seen the pandemic as an opportunity to expedite cloud migration and hasten digital transformation, says João Domingos, Vice President, Head of Western Europe, Fujitsu.

The pandemic and subsequent global lockdowns threw most organizations' plans into chaos. Every employee was affected, with many asked to shoulder added workload or extra responsibility. But for Chief Information Officers (CIOs), the pressure – which arrived almost overnight – has been immense.

Most CIOs faced immediate business critical tasks at an incredible volume. Facilitating remote working for employees, creating new or enhancing current digital services and accelerating digital transformation future plans – the list of priorities has been long and unyielding. And for many businesses, transformation hasn't just been desirable: it's been crucial to survival.

That's why we surveyed 750 CIO and C-level business executives from France, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands and Belgium about the pandemic. We asked how their organizations had coped with the crisis, how their job roles had changed, and about the progress they'd made with Cloud and digital transformation.

The results are laid out in [The Changing Role of the CIO: How technology and a Pandemic Shifted C-Suite Responsibility for Organizational Change.](#)

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Several key trends emerged. More than two thirds (69%) of those we spoke to agreed that the pandemic had accelerated their organization's digital transformation plans. Businesses of every size have had to adapt, get creative, reimagine and invest in their digital infrastructure, as customers began to engage digitally rather than physically. Three quarters (75%) of respondents said digital transformation has been essential to survival.

Cloud technology is seen as an integral building block in the transformation process by 78% of those we polled. Migrating to cloud can empower businesses to innovate faster, to scale up and down with ease, and to unlock the value of data to meet the needs of their customers better. The overwhelming majority (78%) felt COVID-19 had made it an essential investment.

Western Europe has been slower than some other regions – particularly North America – to embrace cloud technology, but that is beginning to change. Some of the obstacles identified by CIOs are a lack of cloud skills within the organization (53%), poor alignment between the business and technology (34%), and a belief that their organization's business models are too complex (35%).

But the commitment to overcome these obstacles is there. Over the past months, CIOs have shown their willingness to 'dig in' and generate results at pace. Now the C-Suite has placed the ball in their hands – 82% believe CIOs are responsible for making digital transformation happen.

It's not a task they have to tackle alone. Working with the right partner, CIOs can set priorities that match the business's objectives, get the entire organization on board, and spot opportunities to transform the business for future growth. Cloud migration can feel like a daunting task – and 56% of CIOs admitted they struggle to find solutions for digital transformation challenges by themselves – but collaborating with external experts can break that journey down into manageable steps.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced businesses around the world to confront how resilient they really are. The pace of digital change required has been tough on CIOs but they've proven it can be done with the right support and the right technology. Now it's time to build on those foundations; to invest in digital-first infrastructure that works for the whole business and has the agility to stand the test of time.

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