

SEPTEMBER 2022

STATE OF IT TEAM RESOURCE DRAIN

IT teams are spending weeks and even months of people-hours on scut work; no-code automation can change this.

Executive Summary

Skilled technologists tend to gravitate to IT for the opportunity to innovate, to solve complex technical problems, and to work with cutting edge technology. But look under the hood at a typical IT professional's workload, and the truth is that their schedule tends to be cluttered with administrative drudge work. What's more, many of the do-it-yourself automation fixes that IT teams devise to ease their overburdened schedules of tedious tasks, can sometimes create hidden administrative strains later down the line.

Data from InformationWeek's 2022 *State of Automation in IT* survey shows that IT teams are spending weeks and even months of people-hours per year on the least innovative scut work. When they do build out automation workflows and integrations, the scripts powering them are often uncontrolled, lack visibility, and are ripe for redundancies. This is causing significant backlogs and failing to meet the needs of stakeholders and business at large.

Key Findings

The study found that:

IT Is Overwhelmed With Repetitive Work

- 58% of organizations say their IT team spends more than five hours per week (six-and-a-half work weeks annually) fulfilling repetitive requests from the business.
- 90% of respondents say that manual and repetitive IT tasks contribute to low morale and attrition in their organizations.
- 45% of IT teams spend more than five hours per week writing scripts for workflow and automation.

Opportunities for Automation Governance Abounds

- 53% of IT teams manage 100 or more applications across their organizations.
- 30% of IT teams task 50 or more system admins to support all of these applications.
- 78% of system admins are building integrations across their application portfolios.
- 69% of system admins are building workflow and automation on top of this application infrastructure.
- 60% of teams spend 10 or more hours per week (a whole financial quarter of people-hours) working on internally developed scripts to manage IT systems and processes.

Ad hoc Automation Is Impacting Visibility and Quality of Service

- 70% of respondents believe that their scripts and APIs are not well documented and lack controls.

- 47% of respondents say their scripts and APIs don't adhere to security standards and an additional 19% report they don't know whether they do.
- 28% of organizations have more than a six-month backlog on automation work requests.
- 25% of organizations have more than a 6-month backlog to fulfill integration work requests.

Wasted Hours - Where Is This Time Going?

- Password resets.
- IT ticket clean up.
- Onboarding/offboarding employees.
- Managing credentials.
- Software provisioning.

IT Is Overwhelmed With Repetitive, Manual Work

Highly skilled IT workers spend much of their time on repetitive, mundane chores to either service their customers, or to tie together the growing ecosystem of apps and cloud services that support the business. The data shows 58% of organizations admit that their IT team spends more than five hours a week on repetitive requests from business stakeholders, and more than one in five say they're averaging 10 or more hours per week doing these tasks (Figure 1). These are routine requests like onboarding users, name changes, department changes, and software provisioning.

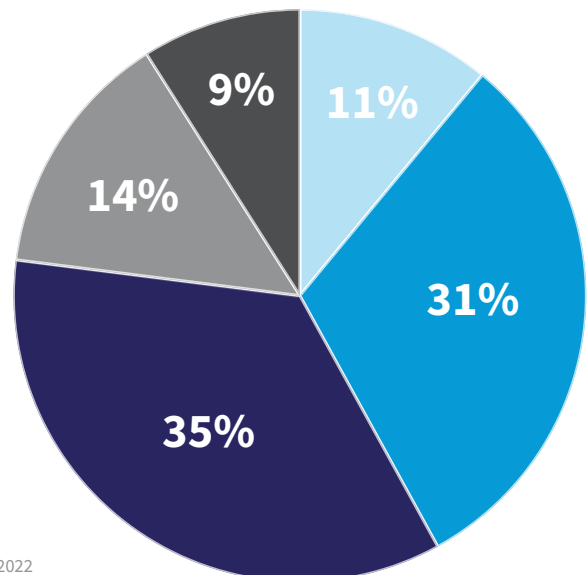
While these are highly repeatable, well-defined tasks that are prime candidates for automation, the reality is that a great deal of these repetitive requests are still fulfilled with manual work.

Figure 1

Time Spent on Repetitive IT Tasks

How much time does your IT team spend on repetitive requests from business stakeholders?

- Fewer than two hours per week
- 2 to 5 hours per week
- 5 to 10 hours per week
- 10 to 20 hours per week
- More than 20 hours per week



Data: InformationWeek survey of 120 IT professionals at companies with 500 or more employees, May 2022

Figure 2

Summation of Time Wasted on Repetitive Manual Tasks

How much time does your IT team spend on repetitive or manual tasks?

Hours Per Week	Calculated Annual Hours	Potential Work Weeks Spent Each Year
5 hours	260 hours annually	6.5 work weeks wasted per year
10 hours	520 hours annually	13 work weeks wasted per year, or more than one financial quarter
20 hours	1,040 hours annually	26 work weeks, or half the year

Note: Extrapolated data calculation demonstrating hypothetical example of potential wasted time spent on repetitive tasks in one year.
 Data: InformationWeek survey of 120 IT professionals at companies with 500 or more employees, May 2022

More than 40% of respondents report that 25% or more of their mundane tasks must be done manually.

A quick calculation shows that an IT worker (or team) who spends 10 hours a week on these manual duties is wasting more than one financial quarter every year chasing down the most tedious undertakings (Figure 2).

Not only is this draining corporate resources, but it also wears on the souls of the IT specialists who are called to their profession to innovate, not to do technical grunt work.

When you look at these statistics in light of the Great Resignation, that has had workers of all types quitting their unsatisfying jobs to pursue more rewarding work, that should rightfully concern IT managers. Our survey linked this onslaught of repetitive work to IT employee satisfaction and the results weren't pretty. Approximately 90% of respondents say that manual and repetitive IT tasks contribute to low morale and attrition in their organizations.

The top five tasks this wasted time is spent on are (Figure 3):

- Password resets.
- IT ticket clean up.
- Onboarding/offboarding employees.
- Managing credentials.
- Software provisioning.

The answer to this problem is better automation, though how teams go about devising automated fixes can sometimes introduce more problems in the long run. With IT workers being the independent problem solvers that they are, many of them have responded to repetitive manual work by building their own scripts, home-grown automations, and using a sea of APIs to alleviate their woes. More than four in 10 respondents to the survey say that they spend at least five hours a week developing home-grown scripts for automation between and within applications and writing scripts for workflow and automation (Figure 4). Referring back to our calculations, that means that IT workers are spending more than six weeks a year tending to the care and feeding of internally built automations.

This works well in limited situations, but at scale, the DIY mentality quickly creates its own IT administrative headaches within organizations.

Opportunities for Data Governance Abound

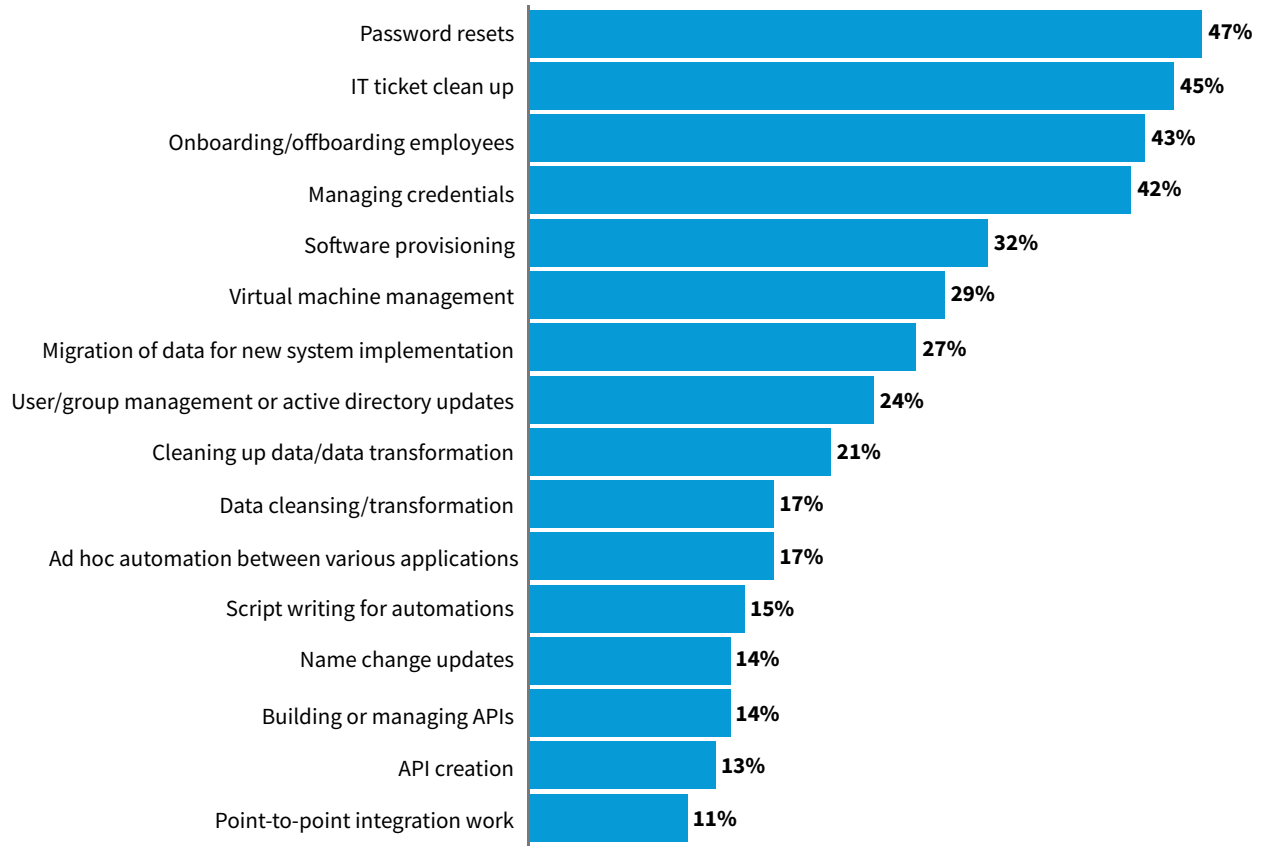
The proliferation of SaaS solutions and departmental point solutions is driving a need for better management of data integrity, data sharing and workflows between these applications.

The state of application portfolios today is such that 80% of all organizations have 50 or more point solutions across which IT teams must juggle administration. Over half — 53% — have 100 more applications to worry about.

Figure 3

Most Common Contributors to Job Dissatisfaction

What are the most common daily tasks that contribute to job dissatisfaction for you or your teammates?



Note: Multiple responses allowed

Data: InformationWeek survey of 120 IT professionals at companies with 500 or more employees, May 2022

With more SaaS and on-premises applications, comes more calls to integrate them into a cohesive ecosystem. And that means an increasing number of APIs floating around. Nearly one-third (31%) of organizations are managing 50 or more APIs, with another 14% saying they don't know how many APIs their teams are juggling. (Figure 5)

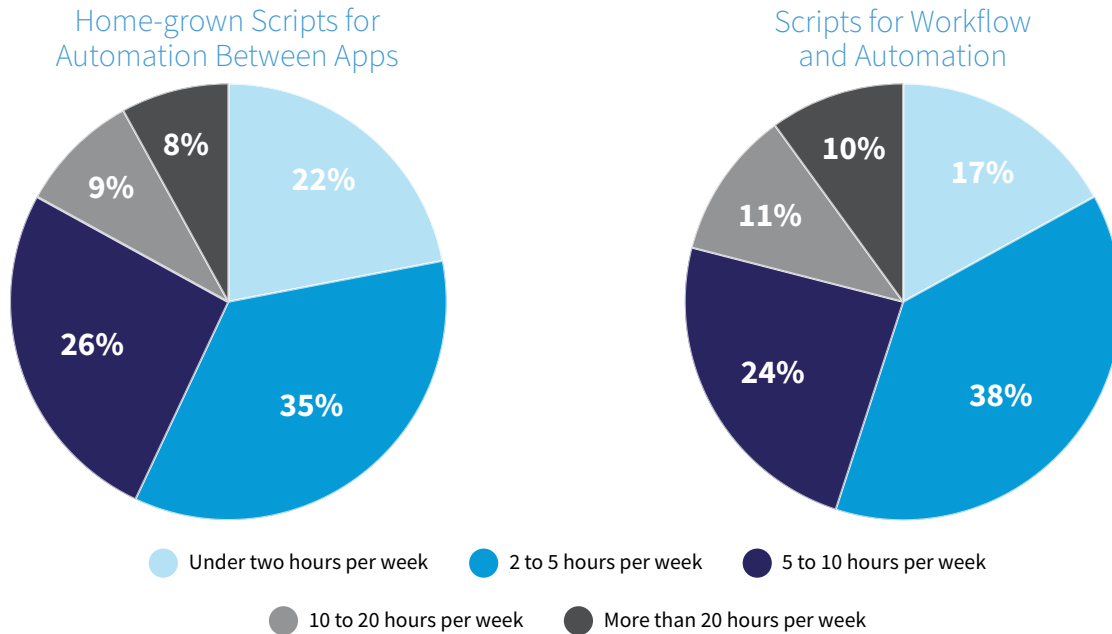
Among enterprise organizations, 30% say they have 50 or more system admins supporting all of these applications. Meanwhile, 78% of system admins are building integrations in these hundreds of systems. Additionally, 69% of system admins are building workflow and automation in these hundreds of systems.

So, an army of system administrators are managing all of these solutions, many are building out integrations and workflows, both within single applications and to external connections with other applications. System integrations are being built over and over again by all of these different system administrators, often with little governance over the process and no documentation. We'll introduce more data in the next section to support this argument, but the survey results imply that the lack of governance means that IT administrators are not ensuring that APIs, integrations, and automated workflows across applications are securely built. Nor is the process orchestrated to limit the amount of redundant effort put into these tasks by various IT admins, who might be working in different groups and not closely collaborating.

Figure 4

Time Spent Writing Scripts

How much time does your team spend on developing home-grown scripts for automation between or within applications? What about the time your team spends writing scripts for workflow and automation?



Data: InformationWeek survey of 120 IT professionals at companies with 500 or more employees, May 2022

This creates a chaotic environment as systems come and go, and various pieces of infrastructure need to be rebuilt or pointed at different applications that might have their bespoke automation built on top of them. This is cumbersome to navigate and introduces big downtime and security risks if change management is not handled properly.

It also often depends on knowledgeable superstar employees with institutional knowledge to keep the whole house of cards upright. When those people leave the organization, many times automations fail.

According to respondents, six in ten say they and their team spend 10 or more hours per week working on internally developed scripts to manage these systems and the processes they run. Again, that’s an entire quarter’s worth of work just in that mission of keeping these home-grown processes running. Nearly the same ratio of respondents say they spend at least five hours a week on integration-related work to get these systems to play nicely together (Figure 6).

With so many administrators and so many APIs, everyone building integrations, working with APIs creating workflow, and moving data, makeshift automation methods are not sustainable — nor are they secure or efficient.

Visibility and Quality of Service Suffers

The ad hoc methods IT typically uses to build out integration and automation are not just governance or compliance issues — they also impact visibility and quality of service offered to end-users.

Now the survey shows that approximately 71% of respondents say they have at least some control over data being moved from system to system by system administrators.

However, only a little more than half of respondents say they have visibility into the bespoke integration and automations they’ve built to deal with the crush of work. What’s more, 64% of respondents admit that they don’t have a clear view into how many scripts are being run in their organization, who owns them, or who has access to them. Given the lack of visibility into

the automated scripts, integration points, and APIs they have running in their environments, it's hard to see those controls being fully effective. Quite likely, controls are in policies that are in shelfware only, not actually practiced or automated in any fashion.

Tellingly, more than half of respondents say their scripts and APIs don't adhere to security standards or they don't know whether they do. Even more concerning is that fewer than 30% of respondents are confident that their scripts and APIs are documented and controlled.

Not only is this lack of governance a security and risk problem, it's also greatly impacting IT's ability to efficiently deliver a consistent level of service to the organization. Backlogs are long and plentiful at organizations, both for building out automations and integrations requested by the business and other IT colleagues. The study shows that 35% of organizations are in a three- to six-month automation backlog, and 28% are working with a six- to eighteen- months (or more) backlog on automation work requests. Additionally, when IT does get around to building its own home-grown scripts, they're often unreliable and require a lot of maintenance. Only 30% of respondents say their scripts are reliable and work as intended. Meanwhile, on the integration front, 29% are in a three- to six- months backlog and 25% are working with a six- to eighteen-months-plus backlog to fulfill integration work requests (Figure 7).

The result of this situation is that end-users and business stakeholders are chafing at the inefficiency.

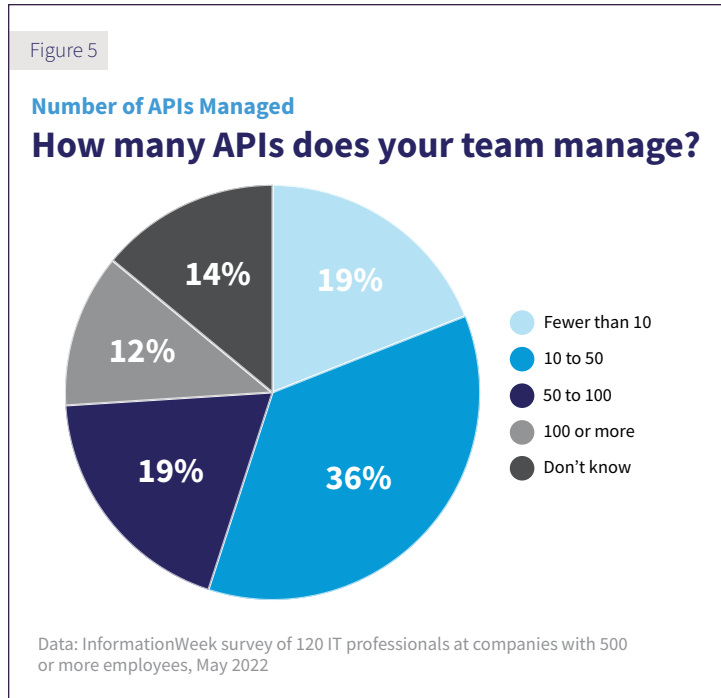
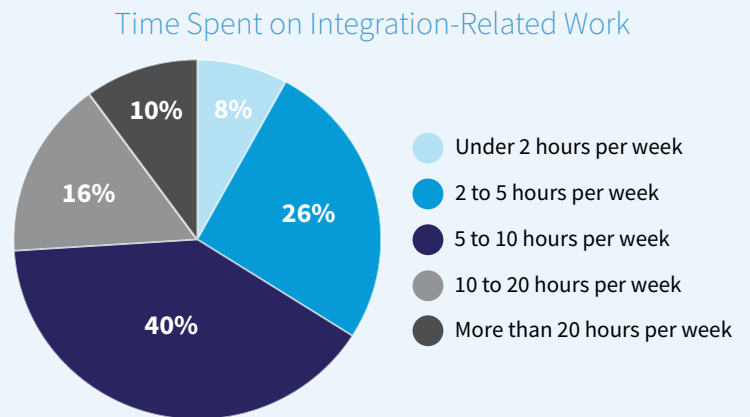
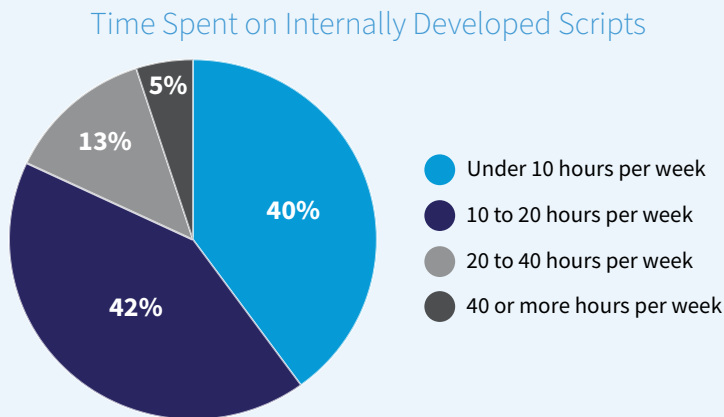


Figure 6 **Time Spent on Managing IT Processes and Integration Work**
How much do you and your team depend on internally developed scripts for managing IT systems and processes? How much time does your team spend on integration-related work?

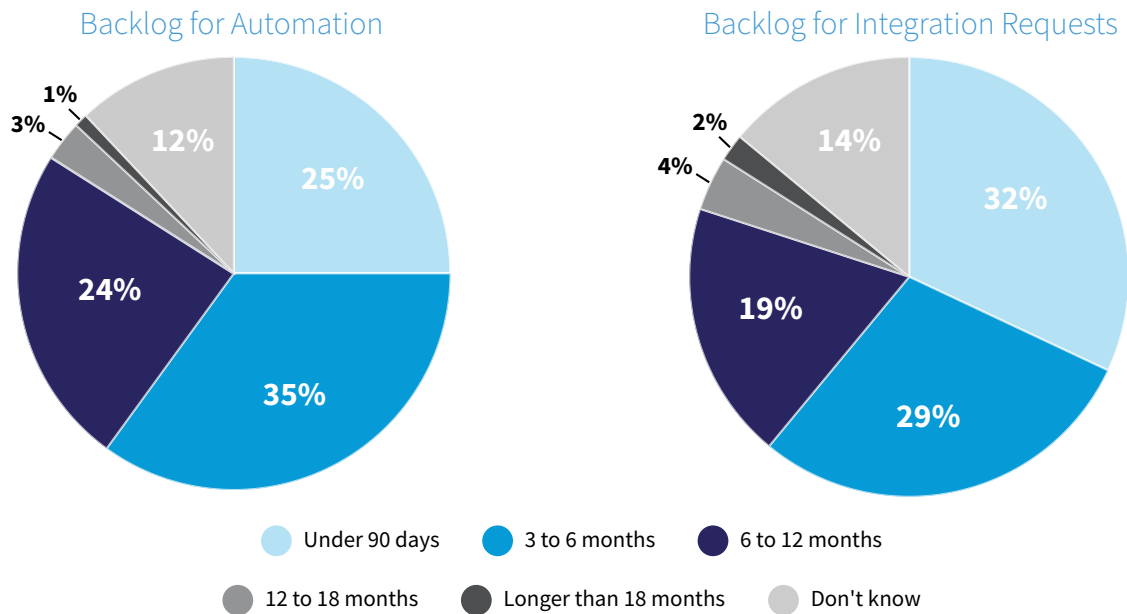


Data: InformationWeek survey of 120 IT professionals at companies with 500 or more employees, May 2022

Figure 7

Length of Backlogs

How long is your average backlog for simple automation? How long is your average backlog for integration requests?



Data: InformationWeek survey of 120 IT professionals at companies with 500 or more employees, May 2022

Some of the most common complaints from internal customers about IT’s response to requests include (Figure 8):

- Length of backlog (41%).
- Security and governance concerns (37%).
- Inability to easily make changes (34%).

Enterprise needs are not being met, with the survey showing that some of the departments most likely to experience the worst backlogs include operations and facilities, sales and marketing, HR, and even the IT team itself. In many organizations, this will lead to stakeholders taking an end-around to build technology to suit, leading to rogue or shadow IT creeping into the equation. Central IT will not necessarily know or have control over the functions introduced in this way.

Seeking Ways to Improve; Enterprise Integration & Automation Platforms Take Off

The survey shows that IT clearly needs to find a path to:

- Be more competitive.
- Be more nimble.
- Reduce friction across the enterprise.
- Improve the end-user experience.

Respondents see the biggest opportunities for improving automation and workflow around the simplest, but sometimes the heaviest, burdens: password resets, onboarding/offboarding of employees, and software provisioning (Figure 9).

iPaaS (Integration Platform as a Service) is paving the way for more efficient and better governed enterprise integration and automation. iPaaS centralizes all integrations into one hub with a library of connectors to common systems such as Workday, Oracle, your ITSM platform, Salesforce, the Active Directory, Azure, and hundreds more, as well as any APIs. With all systems connected and data points now secured in one spot, end-users can leverage the platform to move data, transform data, and to build out automations and workflows using a visual flow builder that can be triggered from a field change, a form fill, or any number of actions.

For example, it is possible to build out a flow to update the Active Directory when a request is made to add a user to a group. This may come in as a ticket, but then the IT team can easily click on ‘approve’ and the system will automatically trigger this workflow versus having to manually do this.

complexity from a single place. Moreover, as the business needs evolve, it is important to have an integration product that makes it easy to edit, add and remove workflow steps, or modify connectors quickly.

Security & Compliance

Today’s organizations operate in an environment where we see an increasing trend in the number and size of security-related incidents, with the cost of each security breach often running into millions of dollars, and having a significant impact on customer trust. Additionally, the risk of mistakes related to manual processes of provisioning and deprovisioning of accounts, reconciling data

between applications, and triggering scripts for various use cases can pose significant liability issues for organizations.

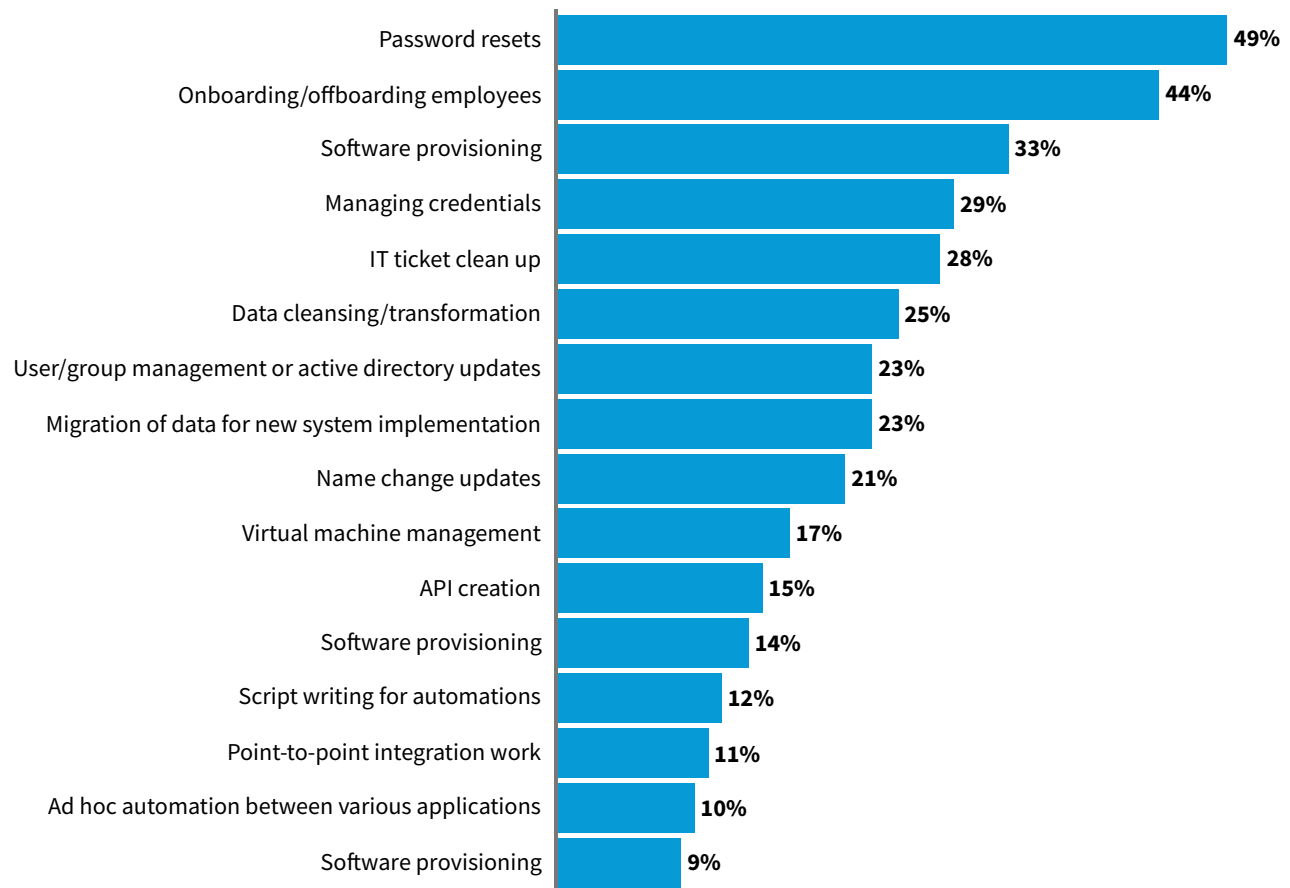
Total Cost of Ownership

It is important to pick an iPaaS vendor whose pricing philosophy aligns with the value they deliver for your current and future business needs. Specifically, you should pick a vendor whose pricing is simple, transparent, and does not result in any surprises when you try to connect new systems and applications to your workflows, as your business needs evolve. Want to learn more about integration and automation with iPaaS? TeamDynamix can help.

Figure 9

Opportunities for Improving Automation and Workflow

Where are the biggest opportunities for improving automation and workflow in your organization?



Note: Multiple responses allowed. Data: InformationWeek survey of 120 IT professionals at companies with 500 or more employees, May 2022

Survey Methodology

InformationWeek conducted a survey in May 2022, on behalf of TeamDynamix, exploring trends in IT automation. The final data set is made up of 120 IT professionals at organizations with 500 or more employees.

Nearly one-quarter of respondents (24%) hold director or manager level IT titles, 15% are high-level IT executive titles such as CIO, CTO, or VP of IT. Rounding out other survey respondent titles are IT supervisor, engineer, security analysts, and line of business managers with technical or IT job functions. Eighteen percent of respondents work at companies with 500 to 999 employees, 34% are at companies with 1,000 to 4,999 employees, and 48% work at companies with 5,000 or more employees. Respondents hailed from 18 industries spread mainly across North America.

The survey was conducted online. Respondents were recruited via email invitations containing an embedded link to the survey. The emails were sent to a select group of Informa Tech's qualified database. Informa Tech is the parent company of InformationWeek and was responsible for all survey administration, data collection, and data analysis. These procedures were carried out in strict accordance with standard market research practices and existing US privacy laws.

