



IT & DATA MANAGEMENT RESEARCH,
INDUSTRY ANALYSIS & CONSULTING

Level up: Enterprise(wide) technology management

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Nobody puts ITAM in a corner

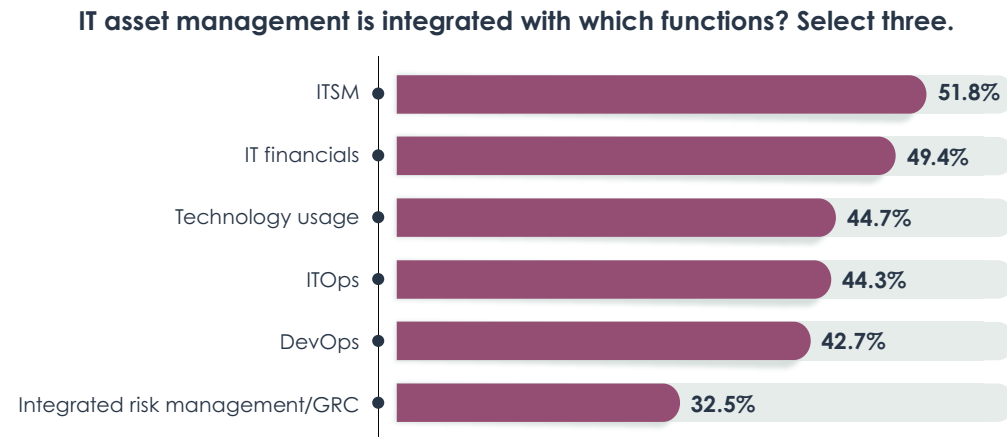
From multi-cloud infrastructure and SaaS to work-from-anywhere devices and across data centers, IT technology is widely distributed at unprecedented levels of diversity, sheer numbers, and business criticality. Yet, ITAM tools often lag behind enterprise needs for enterprise-wide visibility, availability, and accuracy of information, locked in silos of specialized function.

In a series of research initiatives, EMA probed the positions, priorities, processes, and possibilities of ITAM today as viewed by global panels of IT leaders. ITAM is an enterprise interest. Fully 75% of companies report that ITAM initiatives and outcomes are directly visible to C-level command.



ITAM across the enterprise

Asked to identify the functions that rely on ITAM information, the global panels produced a very long list. Respondents identified an average of six functions each, with the top consumers as follows:



ITAM information plays a critical role in the delivery and management of IT services, from DevOps deployment through daily IT operations, support, and ongoing security. Because these groups have specialized ways of looking at the information, many set about getting it by way of specialized tools. Plus, as new asset types arrive on the scene new tools to manage them appear as well, accumulating across IT as they go. The result is a landscape of siloed tools—good at what they do, but unrelated to each other or to the enterprise whole that they serve.

Automation – one of the top enterprise initiatives for innovation and competitive advantage – slams to a halt at each siloed barrier.

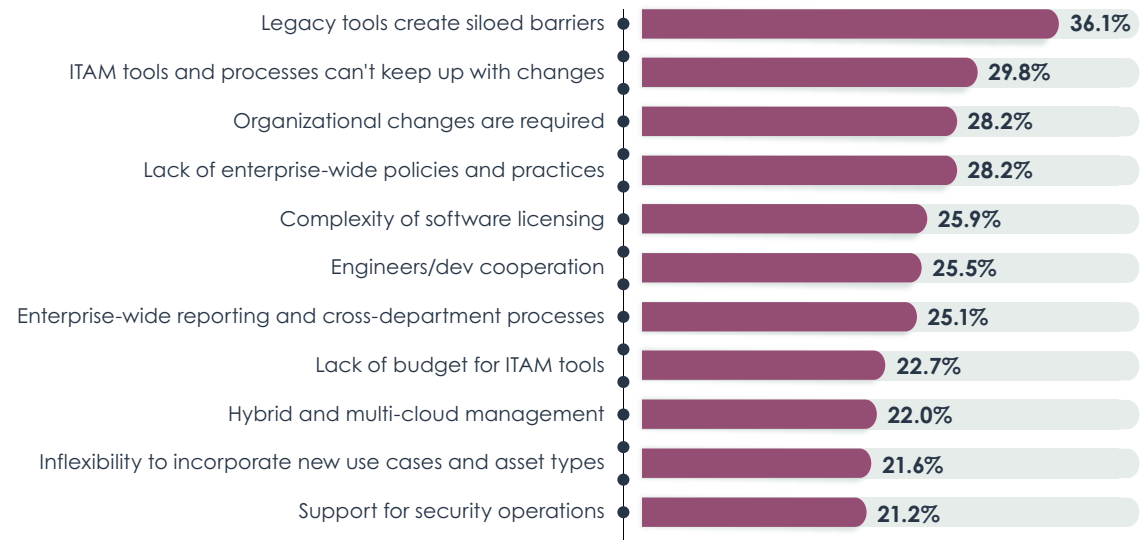
ITAM challenges in digital transformation times

Tools themselves constitute the biggest challenge to ITAM in the face of digital transformation. Change—the essential element of innovation—hobbles traditional ITAM tools and processes.

Hybrid workplace, cloud, and SaaS trends all exacerbate ITAM blind spots, impacting IT service quality and end-user digital experience. The areas that present the biggest challenge or are most in need of ITAM improvement, in order, are:

- ① Cloud (IaaS, PaaS, SaaS)
- ② Data center (devices and software)
- ③ Non-IT enterprise assets (IoT and OT)
- ④ Distributed endpoints

Digital transformation introduces innovation and new technologies. What challenges face ITAM?

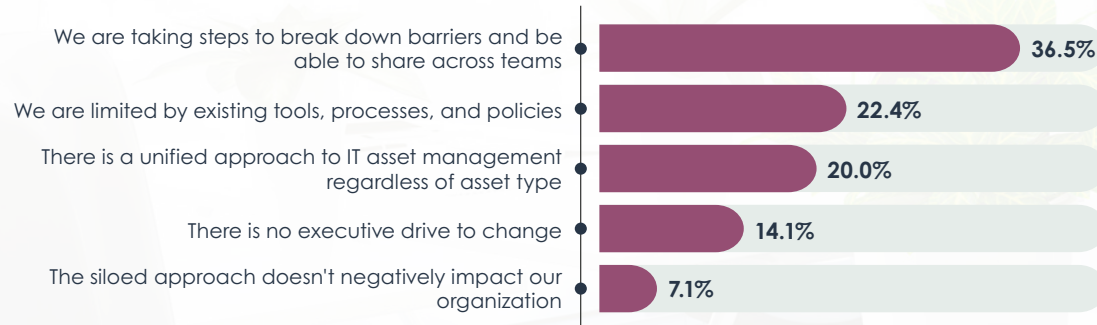


End users present a mixed bag of challenges in the work-from-anywhere model, but security looms largest as an issue across ITAM, ITSM, ITOps, and the executive suite.

Tool consolidation simply reduces the number of siloes

IT asset information that is siloed by asset type (hardware, software, cloud resources...) or use case (security, desktop...) is a barrier to efficiencies and visibility across multi-domain processes and workflows for 93% of the enterprise world. Only 7% of respondents state that “the siloed approach does not negatively impact our organization.”

If independent teams and tools are organized/siloed by asset type, what is the primary reason?



One approach is tool consolidation. On the surface, this approach makes sense since the majority of respondents report using more than six asset management and discovery tools—a healthy 14% use 11-20, with 8% showing more than 20 tools in use. No wonder then that when asked if there is active tool consolidation in progress, 78% said “yes,” while a wistful 14% responded, “No, but there should be.”

Tool consolidation helps. However, it can only go so far. At the end of tool consolidation is a reduced number – not an absence – of siloes.

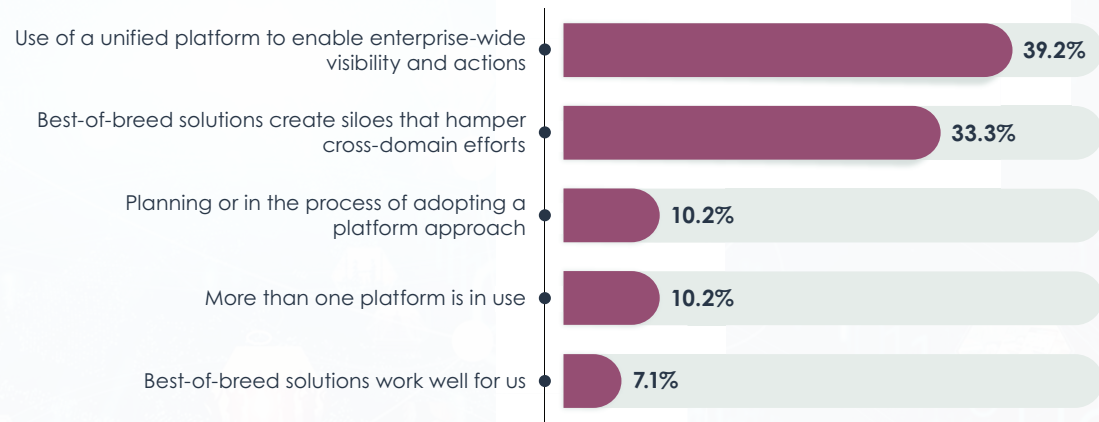
Platforms at work

Getting the best out of best-of-breed

Ripping out useful tools is never an attractive approach. It's also an unnecessary one. Specialized tools serve legitimate specialized needs. Platforms can collect, normalize, and serve data for use across the enterprise, bringing all asset tools into a unified, actionable end-end view.

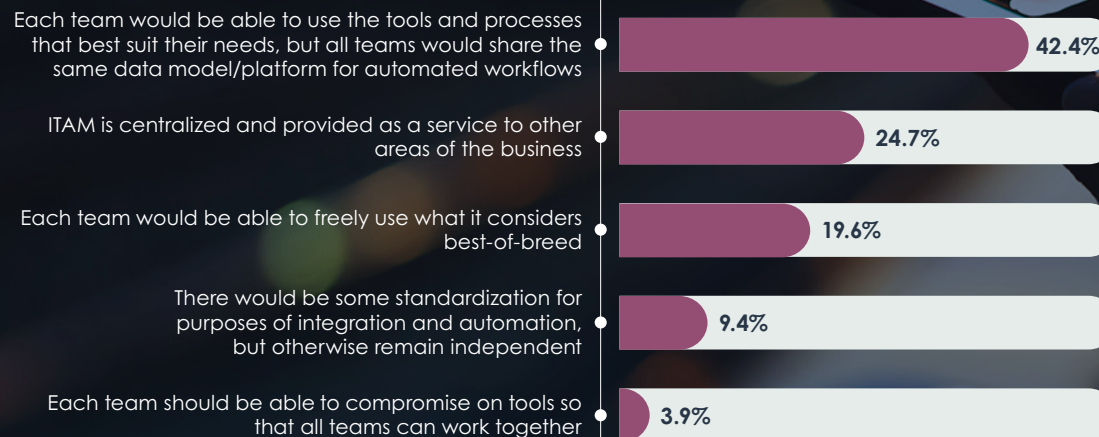
Defining a platform as “a group of technologies (usually software, frequently vendor-supplied) that together form a base on which other applications, processes, and technologies can act or interact,” EMA's global panel landed solidly on platform usage for enterprise-wide visibility and actions. The misnamed “best-of-breed” approach clearly perpetuates silos that directly hamper cross-domain efforts.

Which statement best characterizes your IT organization's approach to cross-domain workflows, processes, and initiatives?



IT asset management reimagined

Freed from the constraints of reality, respondents were asked “In a perfect world, what would be the best approach to IT asset management for your organization?”



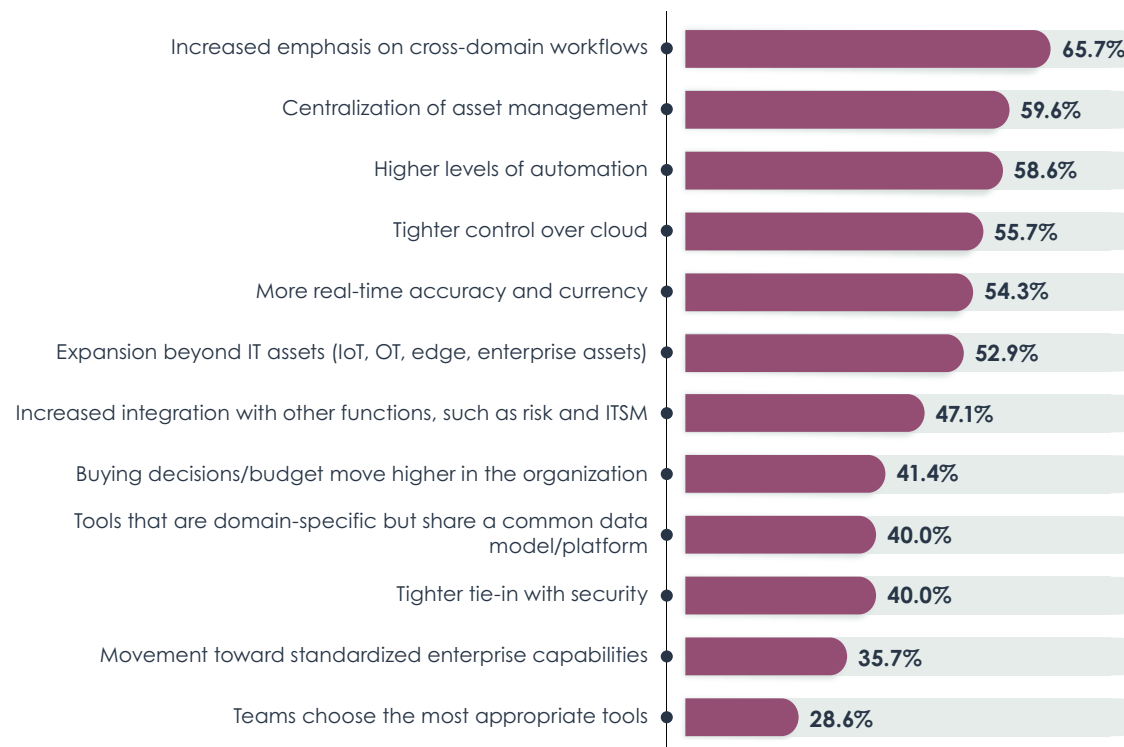
The platform approach accommodates all scenarios for optimizing asset management, making the unpopular choice of “compromise” unnecessary.

What's next?

Change is certain to happen. Much of it will be unexpected if the past few years are any indication. However, decision-makers are clear about the planned changes to IT asset management in the near future.

Cross-domain workflows, centralization, automation, cloud, data accuracy, and expansion beyond classic IT assets lead the list of planned changes to IT asset management in the near future.

How do you see IT asset management requirements changing in the next 18 months or so?



It's interesting to note that although security certainly made the list, in a separate executive panel, C-level participants ranked security in a near tie with cloud for #1 planned asset initiative.

EMA perspective

There is a real disconnect when it comes to IT asset management. Business-driven IT has gone all in on digital transformation and work-from-anywhere, but it's still relying on traditional IT asset management approaches and tools. Those tools just aren't built for the sheer volume, pace, distribution, and diversity of today's technology.

The very definition of "IT asset" is expanding to include cloud, hybrid workplace, business digitization, edge, IoT, and enterprise assets that go beyond the reaches of traditional ITAM tools and practices. Although specialized asset types may well require specialized management tools, at the end of the day, they too must participate in strategic advances. All asset types must be made available for end-end visibility, workflows, reporting, and automated actions consistent with modern operational efficiency.

Whether on-premises or in multiple clouds, in data centers or at a worker's far-flung desk and anywhere in between, technology assets serve the business and they need to be managed from a fully integrated perspective. EMA research and experience show that a platform approach—by whatever name—is essential for bringing enterprise assets into enterprise-wide efficiencies and initiatives. A common data model is necessary to make cross-functional workflows, collaboration, lifecycle management, and automation practical without disrupting specialized processes and tools already in place.

The advantage of a unified platform approach to management of technology assets across the enterprise is apparent in many high-value use cases. Security and compliance are definitely top-of-mind. When a breach or incident arises, it is usually sudden and important. That is not the time to scramble in an attempt to identify, find, and reach assets of interest. That is the time to act. Cross-functional teams need to work on the same information that is easily available, accurate, and current—activity not possible in siloed fiefdoms. Better yet is the ability to proactively ensure that security policy for patches, versions, encryption, and other controls is current, maintained, and validated. →

Although not as dramatic as security, cost savings and efficiencies are always a winning hand for IT. The platform approach to ITAM and beyond returns great savings by way of usage-informed resource optimization and robust audit readiness. EMA research shows that global IT leaders almost universally see their platform investments as profitable ventures—many (17%) state that the value returned is at least double the cost.

Tool consolidation is also a useful undertaking, of course, but without a unifying basis that exercise only results in fewer siloes. Research and ROI aside, a unified platform approach to enterprise-wide IT asset management just makes sense. The visibility it brings facilitates cross-functional workflows, collaboration, and automation because the IT organization, employees, customers, and the business all benefit.

Progressive organizations are moving to a platform approach for centralized asset intelligence and process automation across their entire IT technology estate. Platforms make it practical to streamline complex tasks and efficiently manage incidents, compliance, risk, and spend.

oomnitza

A word from the Oomnitza team

Oomnitza offers the industry's most versatile Enterprise Technology Management platform to deliver key business process automation for IT.

Our SaaS solution, featuring agentless integrations, best practices, and low-code workflows, enables enterprises to quickly achieve operational, security, and financial efficiency leveraging their existing endpoint, application, network infrastructure, and cloud infrastructure systems.

We help some of the most well-known and innovative companies to optimize resources, mitigate cyber risk, expedite audits, and fortify user experience.



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