NEXTPLANE®

THE FIGHT TO COLLABORATE (PART 2):

I.T. STANDS ITS GROUND

An Influx of Unsanctioned Tech Challenges I.T. to Balance Security and Collaboration Needs

HOW AN INFLUX OF UNSANCTIONED TECH CREATES CHALLENGES FOR I.T.

The cadence of technological development is constant. Blink and you'll miss the latest tech gadget, app or software announcement. As consumers, many of us hear about the newest tools and technology from early adopters who eagerly spread the word to friends, family and colleagues.
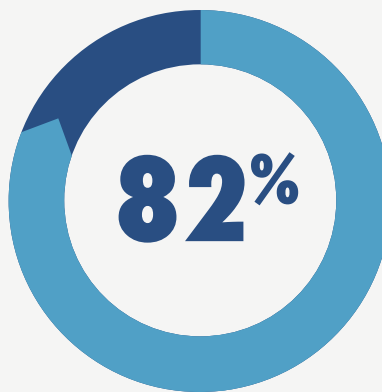
As professionals explore new ways to do their jobs, word-of-mouth plays a key role in discovering new options, and the tools and technologies they adopt can easily go beyond the menu of tools provided by their companies. And when these technologies, such as collaboration tools, fundamentally change the way employees interact and communicate, strong allegiances can form. In fact, in our recent survey, The Fight to Collaborate: A Growing Rift Between IT and Teams, we found that the majority of respondents (63%) expressed loyalty to the technology products they use for their job and nearly half (46%) said they or their team have introduced new technology into their workplace.

But at NextPlane, we wanted to go a step further and explore the impact of this trend on IT, examining the extent of the influx of unsanctioned technology and tools, as well as how they are adjusting to this new norm. To get this perspective, we surveyed 750 IT professionals in a range of positions and industries. We will explore the risks associated with this influx, the internal pressures IT is feeling, and the rate of pushback IT is experiencing from end users who want more say in the tools they use to do their jobs.
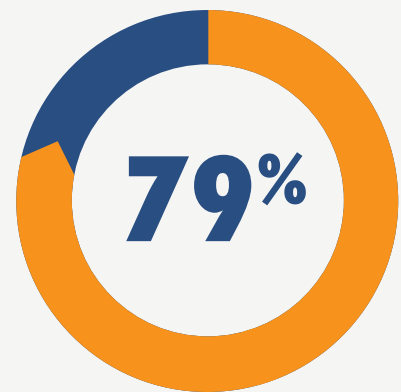
Key findings from the report include:
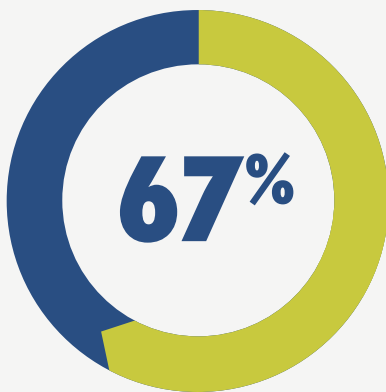
67%

67% of end users or teams have introduced their own team collaboration tools into their organization.

82%

82% said end users or teams have pushed back on IT or management when the company tried to dictate which collaboration tools should be used.

79%

The top risk (79%) identified when employees introduce or use new technologies without IT's approval is risking the security of the company's data and information.

END USERS BRANCH OUT DESPITE I.T.'S CONFIDENCE IN SELECTION OF COLLABORATION TOOLS
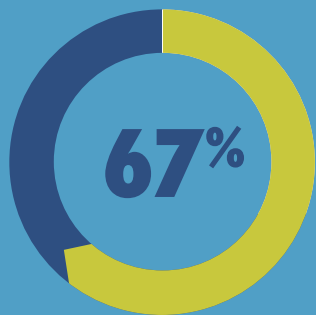
67%

67% of end users or teams have introduced their own team collaboration tools into their organization.

When a new employee is on-boarded at a new job, it's expected they'll be provided with an array of tools, such as a computer, cell phone and project management software to do their jobs. The majority of the time (65%) it is up to either executive management or IT on the purchasing decisions for hardware and software tools that workers need to do their jobs. Additionally, IT (37%) and executive management (29%) are primarily responsible for setting IT policy for the hardware and software employees use to do their jobs. IT professionals are confident they are doing this well.

84%
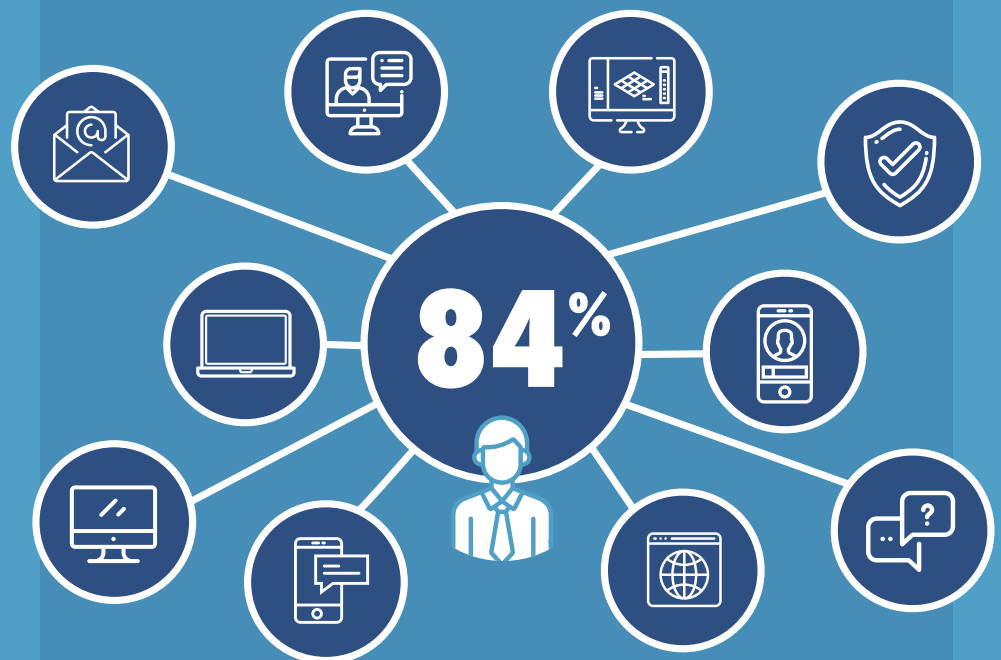
84% believe their company is providing users with the software tools they need to collaborate successfully.

Despite this confidence, IT professionals are recognizing that end users are branching out on their own to find the right tools to communicate with their colleagues.

THE TUG-OF-WAR BETWEEN I.T. AND END USERS

82%

82% said end users or teams have pushed back on IT or management when the company tried to dictate which collaboration tools should be used.

In the first survey in this series, we found that more than half (53%) of respondents said they or another team have pushed back on IT or management when they tried to dictate the technology they use. This time around, we asked IT about employee pushback when it came to collaboration tools, and resistance was much more prevalent. The vast majority of IT professionals (82%) said they have experienced pushback from end users or teams when the company tried to dictate which collaboration tools should be used.

IT is pushing right back.
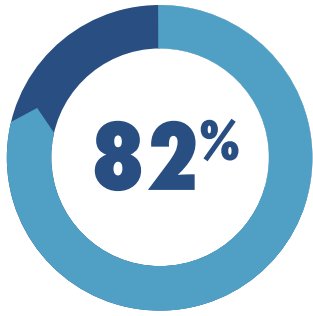
63% say that IT has prevailed when employees push back.

Even as IT prevails most of the time, a small resistance remains among end users to use the collaboration tools of their choice.

13% said that the employees continued using the tools of their choice in defiance of IT and the company.
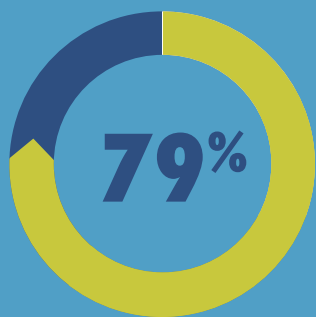
Despite the pushback, more often than not, the company has final say over which collaboration tools are used.

54% said the company has the final say on all of the collaboration tools end users use to do their jobs.

36% said they have some say in what kind of collaboration tools they want to use to do their job.

GROWING PAINS IN THE I.T. WORLD

When end users incorporate unsanctioned tools and technologies into their workflow without IT's approval or involvement, IT faces many challenges. These challenges can include impacting the productivity of IT all the way to risking companies' data and information.

As new technology is introduced without IT's approval or involvement, the top three risks to their company are:

79% The security of the company's data and information

65% The interoperability of the systems my company uses

71% The productivity and efficiency of IT

79%

The top risk (79%) identified when employees introduce or use new technologies without IT's approval is risking the security of the company's data and information.

IT is also often responsible for keeping accurate records on how much employees are using software and technology supplied to them by their employer. This responsibility can include managing subscriptions to project management and collaboration software, as well as maintaining up-to-date usage on tools like cell phones and computers. When employees incorporate technologies, like collaboration tools, outside the menu of options provided by the company, it makes it difficult for IT to keep accurate record of what tools employees are using and how often they are using them. This could be costly for the company as they could be overpaying for unused subscriptions.

Only **23%** felt confident they have visibility into inventory and usage when it comes to team collaboration tools.

MORE PRESSURE MOUNTING ON I.T.

IT's two main responsibilities are ensuring that employees have the tools they need to do their jobs (30%) and ensuring the security of my company's data and information (28%). But as competition for technical talent increases, IT is feeling pressure in other ways. In fact, more than two-thirds (69%) of respondents said that if a highly valued employee (such as a developer or engineer) threatened to quit over which tools they can or cannot use, the company would rather allow them greater control in an effort to avoid attrition. Other internal pressures respondents identified included:

69%
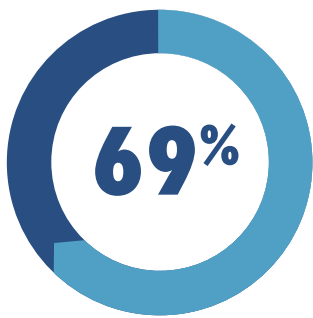
69% say that if a developer or engineer threatened to quit due to not being able to manage the tools that employees use, their company's response would be to allow them greater control to avoid attrition.

47% feel pressure to help the company avoid IT attrition

46% feel they need to keep control over the technology that people use for their work

45% feel pressure to avoid attrition of non-IT employees by allowing them to use the tools they prefer

A COLLABORATION SOLUTION FOR I.T. AND END USERS

Executive management and IT often dictate the hardware and software end users are given to do their jobs and are primarily responsible for setting IT policy for that technology. IT is confident they are providing sufficient tools for end users to collaborate with their colleagues both inside and outside the office. But despite this confidence, they are also recognizing end user and teams are looking for their own ways to connect and work with their colleagues.

A constant tug-of-war is the reality between IT and end users when it comes to dictating which collaboration tools are used in the workplace. As end users circumvent IT to introduce their choice of collaboration tools, IT is standing their ground to maintain company policies.

As employees introduce unsanctioned tools and technologies into their workflow without the involvement or approval of IT, they could be threatening the security of the

company's data and information, the productivity of IT, as well as the interoperability of the systems used by companies. This is also impacting the confidence of IT and their ability to track inventory and usage of what software and tools end users are using in their company.

Federation services can be the collaboration strategy needed in order to curb threats to the security of a company's data and information, while at the same time allowing

end users to collaborate in ways that best fit their workflow. Even as companies are migrating from a unified collaboration platform to team collaboration tools, federation can provide a bridge between platforms so teams can continue to collaborate without interruption. IT is able to switch engines under the hood without disrupting a company's workflow, a win for IT and their end users.

METHODOLOGY:

NextPlane surveyed 750 IT professionals in various industries in November 2018. This survey was completed online and responses were random, voluntary and completely anonymous.